

Q and A with Eckhart Tolle TV Part 6

[Speaker 1] (0:02 - 59:05)

And I say the same in the power of now. It becomes fuel for your, as I say, you become, it becomes fuel for your consciousness. Any difficulty in your life, any challenge in your life, if it's not avoided, denied, rejected, complained about, saying life shouldn't be happening to me, it's accepted as it happens.

Then it becomes fuel for the flame of consciousness. And you grow, consciousness grows, comes through you more and more. And then also at the same time, not only does that free you from the suffering, the self-inflicted suffering that is there when you reject what is, does not only free you from suffering, it also brings a power in that deals then with the situation.

So use whatever challenge comes into your life, you use it as a kind of fuel for the flame of consciousness. And that is done through surrender to what is. And some people need more of that than others.

If you choose presence in your daily life, you may not need the drastic challenges. Remember the, like life shaking you awake. If you're, if you're, if you wake up and stay awake, life doesn't need to shake you awake.

If you go to sleep continuously and the universal impulse of consciousness, if of course towards awakening, then life needs to shake you. Let's look at something from the poetic translation. There's a type of person who, if he renders you a service, has no hesitation in claiming the credit for it.

Another, though not prepared to go so far as that, will nevertheless secretly regard you as in his debt and be fully conscious of what he has done. But there's also the man who one might almost say has no consciousness at all of what he has done, like the vine which produces a cluster of grapes and then having yielded its rightful fruit, looks to no more thanks than a horse that has run its race, a hound that has tracked his quarry, or a bee that has hived her honey. Like them, a man who has done one good action does not cry it aloud, but passes straight on to a second as the vine passes on to the bearing of another summer's grapes.

How to live without ego, claim I did that for you, or claiming credit, but something is done and you move on, like nature. So, and then he sometimes has a dialogue with himself. So now he writes, according to you then, we should rank ourselves with things that act unconsciously.

Is that how we should live? Like the vine or like a horse that has run its race and then forgets about it, doesn't say I did that. And then he replies, exactly, yet we should do so

consciously.

So be like, be as much in alignment as the things of nature that live unconsciously, live in the same kind of alignment with life as the vine, as the horse, as nature, but do that consciously. And that's an interesting point because that is the alignment that you naturally live in before the mind takes you over and before the mind creates separation between yourself and reality, yourself and the world, yourself and other people. Before that happens, you live in a natural alignment with what is.

So there's nobody, there's no ego that says, I did that. There are still some humans whose mind is not highly developed. They would perhaps be called retarded.

Some humans, their mind is not developed enough yet to have an ego. And those humans also can live in that simplicity. I've pointed out before, this is, for example, in the film, Forrest Gump, you have a human who would be considered virtually almost on the brink of retarded.

And he does, first of all, life always gives him what he needs. Things come to him. Secondly, even when he accomplishes great things, for example, he goes to Vietnam, he saves many people out of the, carries them on, he says, well, nobody there to claim credit for it.

He hasn't got an ego. He just tells the story of what he did. That's what happened, that's what I did.

There's no ego there to say, I did that. And so that's a pre-egoic state, like nature. So this is what he talks about is, we can live like that, but consciously.

That's the next stage. And this is the reason why the simpleton or the fool and the enlightened person have a lot in common. And why sometimes the simpleton or the fool or the enlightened person can be mistaken, the enlightened person can be mistaken for a fool, and the fool can be mistaken for an enlightened person.

The latter being the case in the nice film with Peter Sellers, Being There, where the fool is being mistaken for a highly unconscious being. They are close. The human being in whom the ego has not yet arisen can be used more easily by the logos, to use that term, by universal intelligence, because it's not the power of the logos, which is consciousness, is not obstructed by the ego.

And this is why there are many ancient legends and myths, mythology, where the fool has an important mission. That's an archetypal motive in mythology and literature. The fool can do something that the great heroes cannot do.

And again, it's the power of the egoless state, even if it's pre-ego. As the most recent example of that, of course, is the hobbit, Lord of the Rings. The simple guy, little and not

particularly intelligent, only he can do this important, accomplish this important mission, not the powerful heroes, because they have an ego.

But our destiny is to live in that alignment with power consciously. And when that shift happens, your life becomes empowered by the universal consciousness, the logos. And it manifests through you one way or another.

Then the sense of I, of the doer, of I have to do that, goes. And that's good news and bad news, because then suddenly you achieve things when you have become free of ego, if not 100%, maybe 90%. That's enough for you to achieve great things.

If you've become free of ego, you achieve things that before the ego would have done anything to get you there. But of course, you couldn't do it with the ego. And when you've achieved it, unfortunately, the sense of I did that isn't there.

So you don't get that satisfaction. You get a satisfaction of being in alignment with power, but you have no personal satisfaction. Oh, that's a pity.

My ego would have liked to have written the power of now at the age of 25. I did that. Of course, I couldn't have.

The ego can't write that. It's not in alignment with power, the power of now. The ego is a denial of the power of now, so it can't write the power of now.

I'll just open it at random now. There's so much good in here, it's so wonderful. Don't let your imagination be crushed by life as a whole.

Don't try to picture everything bad that could possibly happen. Stick with the situation at hand, which means the present moment, and ask, why is this so unbearable? Why can't I endure it?

You'll be embarrassed to answer. Then remind yourself that past and future have no power over you, only the present. And even that can be minimized, which means the power that the present circumstances have over you, even that can be minimized.

Just mark off its limits. And if your mind tries to claim that it can't hold out against that, well then, heap shame upon it. The simplicity, if you keep to the simplicity of the present moment, can I deal with this situation?

Always. The power is there. Can I deal with what might happen tomorrow?

No, you don't have the power to do that for the simple reason that it doesn't exist, it's not here. Will I be able to deal with, no, you won't. You can only deal with the present.

The power can only come into the present. You don't need to have it for tomorrow. Oh, sorry, I forgot that you were there.

So you see that the perennial philosophy of the spiritual truths runs through from the most ancient times to now the same truths coming through different words, different forms, it's there. The truth of awakening, of living in alignment with the greater intelligence, the truth of surrender to the present moment, the truth of letting go of imposing stories on reality, the mind, not live in the mind, compulsive thinking, waking up to sanity. You can read a book like that, that is part of the perennial philosophy when you need it, you can read it because you need a reminder, a little pointer.

You can even have several copies, one in your bathroom, one by your bedside, one in your office. Book like that is, Tao Te Ching is like that. Meditations by Marx Aurelius.

There's no continuous text, it's not, you can open anywhere, read a line or two. You can do it with Stillness Speaks also, open it, read a line or two. Or even The Power of Now on New Earth, you can do that.

And other spiritually alive books. And they're to be used as a reminder, but not a substitute, a substitute for living it. So if you use the device that is here meant to remind you and to point the way, if you, anything that is done to excess, no matter how good, turns into bad.

So there is such a thing as an over-reliance, over-use of reminders, of pointers, where you almost compulsively read. Yes, you're taking in some energy. Yes, it does something.

And yet in your daily life, you're still not living it. And so it can happen, it does happen to some people that the reading of spiritual books or going to seminars or workshops or retreats or listening to speakers becomes a substitute for living it in every moment of your life. So you need to find the balance between using the help that the universe offers you.

It's beautiful in the form of a teacher or so-called teacher. It's just, there is no teacher as such. It's only, teacher is a function.

I am a teacher when I sit in this chair, but when I leave this room, I'm not a teacher anymore. It's only a function. It's not my identity to be a teacher.

It's a, that would be a form identity. So, but use the so-called teacher or teaching as a help. Don't get attached too much to the form of the teaching so that you can't let go.

Some people get attached to teachers. That's not the case with me because I work mostly with large groups. So it's more difficult to get attached to me as a teacher.

It's all in you. And if this book is powerful or any other spiritual book is powerful, how do you feel? Where is that power that you feel that's in the book or the clarity or the spiritual power that you feel is in the teacher?

How do you know that this is in the, that it's in the teacher? There must be something in you that recognizes it because there are others to whom a spiritual book would be meaningless. So that in them which could recognize is not awake.

They don't, a spiritual book is empty words. This is still the case with some newspapers and magazines. They just, there's nobody in the entire newspaper or magazine that has any inner access to spiritual teaching in any form.

It could be, I believe, the entire New York Times, although it's a good paper, they don't have a single person who is open to. So whenever anything spiritual is mentioned, I read something again yesterday in the New York Times, they have to kind of distort it and make it into something slightly absurd. It says a certain number of people in the States have said they've had some kind of realization of the divine or God.

And when they report it, they have to make it into something absurd. There must be a funny angle to that. They have a realization of God, this is weird.

So there are still people who don't. So when you see that you feel the truth of it, it must be in you, otherwise you wouldn't see it. So the power is in you.

And the answer is in you. And you are the answer to all your searches, whatever your search is, you are the goal. You are the answer.

It's never outside. And then of course a time comes when you don't need any more spiritual books, but you can still enjoy them. Then it's a different kind of reading.

You read a spiritual book, wow, this is so beautiful. Yes, yes, yes. You read like, oh yes, yes, that's it.

And there is an enjoyment in reading it. That's beautiful. And you don't need it anymore, but you enjoy it.

If the impulse comes, write down your own insights. When they come, they may come to you. You can be like Marcus Aurelius and write down little, out of the stillness, little, oh, even if they seem not that significant, write it down.

Then perhaps more comes because you've given it some attention. It has come as an original thought and you've given it some attention. Everybody knows, well, psychotherapists who work with analyzed dreams, they know that if you pay attention to your dreams, then more come.

You'll remember them more and more and more significant dreams. That's at least about what Jung said. Carl Jung said, if you give attention to your dreams, then, and write them down.

This is not what I recommend here. Daily life is enough of a dream. And you can do it.

I'm not saying don't, but what I'm saying is you give attention, you appreciate, then more comes. So if you give attention to an original thought that comes to you, rather than saying, oh, this is not important enough to write down, just write it down, then perhaps more comes. And then perhaps after a while, you have another book like this or whatever form it takes.

You don't write, you don't write, you can't write a book like that. I can't write a book that is powerful. You as the person, no person can do that.

And you don't have to. It's only if there's openness in you. And again, it's the, if you're too much in the form, the power doesn't flow through.

If you access the formless, stillness, space, that's where the power flows through. And it does it through this form. And if some of you become spiritual teachers in quotation marks, or you already are in some way, in some way you already, if that consciousness, if the awakening consciousness is arising in you, you cannot not teach because your daily life and your interactions with other people become, you teach by being present, you teach presence.

Even if you say nothing about presence, by being present in daily life and in your interactions with others, you teach presence. And so that is part of your purpose in life. Now, whether it or not becomes a more formal teaching situation, that may be the case or may not be the case with you.

But again, you can't do it. If you feel I'm now ready to be a spiritual teacher, that's probably not it. But if you have the feeling I don't really know anything, that could be it.

And not afraid of not knowing anything. If you have the feeling I don't know anything and you get what I should know, then that's not, doesn't work. But not knowing is the most powerful state.

I said that previously, not knowing and then see what words come. You can start by giving, if you're not doing so already, give little talks in your living room or somebody else's living room or not to your relatives because they may not listen to you. No.

Remember what happened to Jesus when he went back to his own village. Nobody wanted to listen to him. Who is this guy here?

Do we know who he is? He's the son of such and such. What's he, who does he think he is?

And if they had had newspaper at the time, they would have had self-proclaimed master misleading the multitudes. Well, thank you to the form of Marcus Aurelius, the consciousness, of course, wrote the book, The Timeless Consciousness, but it came through the form. The form was transparent enough for it to come through.

We don't need to ask, well, was he enlightened or not? Irrelevant. It was transparent enough for that power to come through.

And of course, in your life also, that's the important question is not, am I enlightened? Am I going to be enlightened or fully awake or whatever? No, at this moment, are you dense as the form, opaque?

The more negative, the more identified with thought, the more dense you are as an energy field, not transparent. So the only important question is at this moment, are you that transparency? So the form is still there, but it has lost its density.

That is the ego. That is identification with thinking. That is every negative emotion.

You become contracted and dense. And when that goes through acceptance, surrender, alignment with what is, space opens up rather than space becomes more important than form. And you feel that, you feel that in yourself.

The space that you are is more important than the form that you are. And you feel that in yourself as you feel that primarily you are your space. Very much secondary is, yes, you're also here as a body with a past and certain psychological makeup and some thoughts, but it's secondary.

And with that comes an enormous trust. If you can feel that primarily you are space, which you cannot define. You can't say, you don't really have a concept anymore of exactly who you are.

As long as you think you know who you are, that's not who you are. But when you no longer know who you are and become comfortable with not knowing who you are, then you're beginning to be who you are. No opinion really anymore of who you are.

You're just a space of consciousness. Not, you can't really just say much more. And so you're neither good or bad as that space of consciousness.

You're not good or bad. You're beyond good and bad. The opposites don't apply anymore.

Your past becomes irrelevant if you are that space of timeless consciousness, which is what you are. Your past is secondary. You can talk about it still and laugh about it, but it's not important, which is good news if your past isn't...

It's good news if your past isn't that great. But if you're very proud of your past and your achievements, then perhaps you want to hang on. So that can be an obstacle.

The great things that I did, I did them. And so the trust that comes when you are space, when you feel that you move around simply as a simple space of consciousness, fear goes, disappears from life, because fear is only... Identification with form produces fear.

Identification with space is freedom from fear. And so as we sit here with nothing happening except one little thing, the mind can drift off and create some imaginary happening. So you start thinking about past, future, dreamland, because the mind is not comfortable with nothing happening.

So you can, as you sit here, drift off into dreamland of past and future until finally the session actually starts, not realizing that it has started already. In the same way that people wait for their lives to start, not realizing that it started already. So what's the alternative then to drifting off?

The alternative is to just be present with your attention in the simplicity of this moment where there's almost nothing happening. So what's left of you when you're not following some train of thought and the space opens up? What's left then of this moment?

What's the content of this moment? Just whatever your senses are perceiving, the totality of the room, the lights, some noises, the voice, and that which makes it all possible. There's a light in which it appears, the consciousness behind it all.

That's what's left. It has no form, no time, just presence. And that's who you are beyond past and future, nothing to do with your personal history, except that your personal history has brought you to this moment of being aware that there is a dimension in you that has nothing to do with your personal history.

And nothing to do with conceptualization in the mind, any kind of mental noise, just a kind of an aware space. And that's the ground. All what arises out of that is joy and aliveness.

And it's peaceful to know yourself as that is peaceful. Where is this? It is peace, but alive peace.

So the peace is already there as the essence, never in conditions, outer conditions or mental conditions cannot provide you with peace, except the delusion of peace for short moments. So to seek peace in conditions, whether mental conditions or external conditions is frustrating. And you overlook the simple fact that the realm of peace, which is the unconditioned consciousness in you to the timeless, the light of the world, Jesus called it, is already there in its fullness, has always been there, will always be where, although the saying has and will doesn't make sense because it's timeless, but it's being, it's overlooked.

The essence is overlooked because of the seductive nature of the world of form, thoughts that continuously arise, sense perceptions, and you lose yourself in forms, thought forms and external forms and following up. And then you're full of stuff looking for yourself in some other stuff, more stuff for my mind. And then, so you overlook the essence that's always there.

So it's a redirecting of attention from attention to form and now we have to be careful when I say attention to the formless dimension in you, that it sounds as if the formless dimension in you could become an object of your attention, but it can't because the formless dimension in you cannot become an object of your attention, of your consciousness, because the formless dimension is consciousness.

Consciousness can't become an object to itself. So in that sense, you can never find the essence of who you are as if you say, I know I have it. You can never say I have it.

All you can ever say is I am it. So it can't be an object. You cannot make yourself into an object and I know myself.

You can't know yourself. You can know lots of things about yourself, all to do with mental content, but you cannot know yourself and it's who you are in your essence because you are the eternal subject, the basis of all knowing. The moment you say, I know myself, then there's I and myself.

You've already split yourself into two and basically that's the ego, where you split yourself into two and say, oh, that's me, and then you have a relationship with yourself, which my dog does not have a relationship with himself. The cat doesn't have a relationship with itself. The split hasn't occurred yet, me and who I think I am.

So usually the progression for people is first you have a dysfunctional relationship with yourself. You hate yourself a lot of the time and sometimes you say, oh, I'm really great, but not for long, and then you doubt yourself and then you're learning about becoming more loving towards yourself. That's great.

That's the stage of stickers on your bathroom mirror. I love myself. That's the intermediate stage.

And then from there, you go on to the realization that there are not two of you, that you are yourself. And what's left is the simple fact that I am who I am, or I am that I am, which by the way was God's answer from the Old Testament when they asked God, who are you? So you can't know yourself.

You can only be yourself. There's nothing conceptual to know. If it's conceptual, that's not who you are.

In other words, you have to embrace ignorance. As the Course in Miracles says, your understanding is not an important contribution to the truth. And of course, there's something in you that wants to, I want to understand myself more.

Of course, you can go that way for a long time. And of course, there's always more. And eventually you get to the end of the road where you give up.

And that's the moment when you're no longer a problem to yourself. And when you're not a problem to yourself, by the way, you're not a problem to others anymore either. How many people walk around with an identity, a sense of identity that basically consists of the belief that they are a problem, which seeks a solution?

Of course, there is a solution, but that's not where the egoic self is seeking. The solution is already here, it's not in time. This moment, the realization that at this moment, you already are who you are as the awareness in which the form of this moment appears.

In other words, you become aware that you are aware, you know yourself as the awareness. The awareness knows itself. That's an amazing realization.

That means that's the I am realization, but not this or that, just I am. And that's peace, to know yourself through that act of not knowing, not to know yourself in any conceptual sense, to be yourself as the awareness. And then the dance of forms, of course, continues your life.

And there's a peace in the background. The art of living is to be aware that you are the awareness, be aware that you are the presence, be aware as the presence, the awareness, while not only you look at things and observe things, but even while you do and talk, and you'll notice spaces in your life, and that's vital, spaces while in between things, where before there was no space, at least you didn't notice it, but now you notice that there are spaces, many spaces in your life where there's an opening into just pure presence. And it could just be picking up an object and putting it down again, looking at a tree without labeling it in any way, just being the perceiving presence for it, walking from here to there without making each step a means to an end, but just be present with every step. The spacious stillness when you're listening to another human being, just being there as the space, not as an object of some mental noise.

And so there's a gradual thing where the personality recedes a bit in your life, still operates when it's needed, but more and more there's awareness that arises, you are there as an aware presence rather than as a person with a past and a future. So the person begins to become transparent somewhat to the light of awareness that shines through the form. Whereas before it was dense, it's just pushing against, trying to get through a little chinks, occasionally get through, you have moments of, and then it's gone.

So it gets through. Now you may notice a certain alertness is required, not no tension or strain, but a certain alertness so that thought does not get hold of you and drag you along where it wants to go, the old conditioned thinking. So certain alertness is required and we are here, this is our meditation today here.

The alertness needs to be there for otherwise you drift off into the dream state of identification with thinking. And then suddenly, out of that alertness, thoughts can come,

but they will be not a replay of the old conditioned thinking, but more vitally alive thoughts when they do come, insights, realizations, a new way of aliveness when you, that is there a fresh new thought, inspired, creative. And at other times, there's just, of course, love is part of what comes out of that unconditioned space, can't come from anywhere else.

We are lucky today to have an honored guest here. It's becoming a tradition as part of our sessions. And I'd like, this guest does not need introduction, but I would like to introduce her by telling you how I first got introduced to her.

She doesn't know that, I haven't told you yet. It was about 1986, perhaps, and I was living in London and the Course in Miracles had just been published, I think the year before, in England in a one-volume paperback. And whereas at first, when I heard Course in Miracles, I said, that's probably just another weird thing that's come through from California.

I had the European prejudice, late I realized that many wonderful things do also come from California, some weird things too. Of course, I didn't realize the Course in Miracles didn't really originally come from California at all, it came from Manhattan, Columbia University, well, unofficially, not sponsored by Columbia University. And so I was visiting a friend, having tea, and talking a bit about this Course in Miracles that I had actually discovered was actually quite profound.

So I had bought a copy. And my friend said, oh, I want you to listen to this. Somebody gave me this tape, a copy of a copy.

The sound isn't too good, but you'll still understand. This is a woman, she gives talks about the Course in Miracles. Okay, I'll just put it on now, listen to this.

He put it on and it almost seemed like I breathed in at the beginning of the talk and I didn't breathe out until the end of it half an hour later. There was such fire and empowerment in it. When the talk finished after half an hour, I went, wow, that's amazing.

And I said, what's her name? And she said, oh, I can't remember. Oh, it's Marianne Williamson.

Oh, never heard of her. At that time, there were no books yet and so on. So I still remember how the talk finished.

She said at the end, and it's almost over, thank you very much. Now, I can't remember what that refers to. I think it must refer to the egoic insanity of the world and it's almost over.

And we have her here and I'm going to ask her in a minute whether she still thinks it's

almost over. Please welcome Marianne Williamson, please. So is it almost over?

[Speaker 3] (59:07 - 59:41)

Well, as you well know, even though it began in millions of years ago in time as we know it, it's not actually happening. It's a hallucination, which is all just the twinkling of an eye, anyway. So from that perspective, it's always beginning, it's always almost over.

And it's always ending in any of these moments that you discuss.

[Speaker 1] (59:41 - 59:43)

And in another sense, it's over already.

[Speaker 3] (59:44 - 59:51)

Exactly, in any moment, which you so profoundly describe, it can't exist.

[Speaker 1] (59:52 - 59:52)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (59:52 - 59:55)

So when we're with you, it's over.

[Speaker 1] (59:56 - 1:01:01)

Yes. Yes. And so how is the, now the thing is the realization in humans that that dimension is there where this is recognized as a kind of dream.

That the important thing is whether humans realize it. Because as long as you don't realize it, you are part of that dream, which very often turns into a nightmare. How is the, I know that Marianne is much more in touch with I am with the world, the current affairs and so on, especially in the States.

How do you see the collective consciousness in, let's just maybe talk about North America and later about the world. How do you see the state of the collective consciousness now?

[Speaker 3] (1:01:02 - 1:05:42)

Well, from a spiritual perspective, we can't have a meaningful inquiry about anything in the world without the context of that inquiry being what's happened, being in the realm of spirit or pure consciousness. And one of the main points of the course in any study of truth with a capital T is that there is only one of us here. And that in truth, there is no world.

It's all happening inside us. And because within that perspective, all minds are joined because there's only one of us here. In whatever moment we as individuals reach that place of pure consciousness, the presence of which you speak, holy instant and course in miracle.

We don't just create that greater opening for ourselves, but simultaneously it's created for everyone else as well. I was telling you yesterday about a fascinating documentary I saw the other night called I Am. And in the documentary, there's a conversation about cruelty versus cooperation in the animal kingdom.

And there was something there that I'd never seen. And it was if a group of deer or a group of gazelle or a group of any animals that all travel together, how do they decide which waterhole to go to? Or when birds are flying, what happens to make the whole flock fly a certain way?

And what was so fascinating to me was in this documentary, they were saying that in this group, I can't remember if it was gazelle or deer or something along that line, there is an alpha male leader of the pack. But that in the decision of what waterhole to go to, and there were three of them, it wasn't the alpha male who made the decision. It was as each individual gazelle or deer, whatever it was, turned their head towards a particular waterhole.

When 51% of the animals turned their head in one direction, the whole group of them went there. And that often the alpha male was just like, oh, okay, we'll go there. And I thought that was so amazing.

We talk about that in terms of the 100th monkey or the tipping point, whatever that is. But this elucidation of the 51% in nature, I thought was fascinating. So I feel hopeful.

First of all, I think hope itself is a moral imperative. I feel hopeful about the state of humanity because there are so many groups just like this. Because you, people like yourself, are being filmed and people literally all over the world are participating in this deeper inquiry and experience.

It's not just an abstract teaching. It's the entire journey trickling down. And this is clearly happening.

And it does not belong to any one ethnic group or geographical region or religion. So the state of humanity, for me personally, is just fine, thank you. The problem we have or the challenge we have, the situation we have, is that there are institutional identities, mainly political, financial, in terms of business, technology, wielding tremendous material power.

And that material power takes profound forms such as nuclear bombs. And even though those material identities are never the source of the enlightened progress, I believe that

they are there in a way as a signal to us not to tarry.

[Speaker 1] (1:05:45 - 1:05:45)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:05:46 - 1:05:54)

Not to tarry. Because as the Course in Miracles says, the ego is suspicious at best and vicious at worst.

[Speaker 10] (1:05:54 - 1:05:55)

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 3] (1:05:59 - 1:06:13)

And as soon as we reach that vibratory field of whether it's 51% or whatever it is, then all of those material forms will fall of their own dead weight. As soon as there's enough light, darkness cannot exist.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:14 - 1:06:40)

Yes, we already see that happening to some extent. Some of the monolithic, egoically created structures are- The wall in Germany. Yes, collapsing from within.

Of course. Russian communism collapsing from within. It's almost the saving grace, perhaps, of the ego that it seems to have built into it a self-destruct mechanism that eventually gets triggered.

[Speaker 3] (1:06:41 - 1:09:06)

Well, the Course in Miracles says there is a limit beyond which we cannot miscreate. However, in Course in Miracles terms, it is not up to you what you learn. It is merely up to you whether you learn through joy or through pain.

Oh, the ego's dominance will fall. The only issue is, do we go away of wisdom or do we go away, which would involve immeasurable amounts of human suffering? And that is our choice in the matter.

Not whether the ego's dominance will end, because like you said, it's got a built-in self-destruct. The issue is, how is this going to end? Is it going to end through joy or through suffering?

I'm a mother, and any parent has had the experience of something that happens when this fierce impulse arises within you and you say to your child about whatever it is, that will not happen in this house. And I look forward to the collective uprising in humanity,

realizing that every child on this planet is one of our children, and realizing now that this entire earth is our house, it's our home. I think when it comes to certain forms of possibility, which are nothing short of catastrophic, just as we would, seeing that possibility of catastrophe inherent in a situation, say to one child, that will not happen here, that we will get to that place about this planet, that will not happen here, because as we do, as that conviction, because the Course in Miracles says miracles arise from conviction, as the realization that the transformation will occur, but that it is in our hands how quickly it occurs and how much suffering it does or does not involve, when that understanding is met with a conviction, we will not go that way. Then I believe something joyful beyond, just like the night of the falling of the Berlin Wall times what, a million?

[Speaker 1] (1:09:07 - 1:09:38)

Yes, yes. So what is the individual's role as far as the huge egoically created structures is concerned? And you are, I'm a kind of person, I almost withdrawn a bit from the world except for the teaching that goes out into the world.

You're a little bit more of an activist. So what is, how do you see your role as far as the?

[Speaker 3] (1:09:39 - 1:09:59)

Well, from a Course in Miracles perspective, we are all given our own assignment. We all have a particular part to play. You are a profound player in the world, as everybody here knows, because you are acting so profoundly on the level of cause.

[Speaker 1] (1:09:59 - 1:09:59)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:10:01 - 1:12:08)

And when we are in that state that you mentioned earlier of pure consciousness, we receive nothing short of instruction. Whether it's conceived of that way or not, it's interesting looking at you having been born in Germany, moving to London, ending up in Canada. I feel strongly that there's something here about honoring one's incarnation, where you were born, nationality, sex, sexuality.

And even though in your case clearly there's a profound internationalism to your assignment. And you and I have discussed how my daughter lives in England, and she's got some soul connection to England, even though she was born in the United States. I have some, I don't, I take very personally and deeply the successes and failures, both contributions and mistakes of the United States as an American woman.

But from a Course in Miracles perspective, which is just one statement of truth, of

course, at the deepest level, we're neither male, female, black, white, Jew, Gentile, American, Canadian. I mean, those are all. But when we are in that place of depth inquiry and depth knowing and depth experience, we're beyond all of that.

And yet we are sent to work. And you work plenty out there. And the Course in Miracles says every day we are to say, where would you have me go?

What would you have me do? What would you have me say and to whom? So I just try to do that as much as the next person does.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:09 - 1:12:16)

So honoring the form without identifying with it and believing that's who you are.

[Speaker 3] (1:12:16 - 1:12:17)

Or taking it too seriously.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:17 - 1:12:19)

Yes, that's an important.

[Speaker 3] (1:12:19 - 1:12:24)

Gandhi said, the greatest service I can be to my country is if I can reduce myself to zero.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:26 - 1:13:19)

Oh, that's a wonderful statement. So that really means discovering the unconditioned dimension in yourself. That's when you, the form as which you appear ultimately is recognized as an illusion, not who you are.

So the elimination of ego is the really inherently connected with the, what is perhaps the central point of this teaching, the possibility of compulsive thinking coming to an end, old conditioned compulsive thinking so that a space arises in you where there is no thinking but just pure awareness.

[Speaker 3] (1:13:20 - 1:15:30)

It's counterintuitive, but when we are there realizing the illusionary nature of the realm of form, that's when we have power within that realm. Because we don't take it seriously at the same level, we no longer fear it. We no longer fear it to dance because we know that we are not that.

We are not its success or its failures. And that's when we have the power from this perspective that we so embrace to do that which we are sent to do within it. Like that slogan, what would you do with your life if you had no fear of what the outcome would

be?

Because when you were talking before about how the dream has become a nightmare, I don't know if you were saying that here or when we were talking before, that this world is a dream and it has become a nightmare. In A Course in Miracles, it says we do not go from the nightmare to awakening. We go from the nightmare to a happy dream.

So that when, right now we have 17,000 children on this earth who starve every day, just that fact alone. We have a billion people on this planet who live on \$1, \$1.25 and less a day. Now, when we have a planet where, and no dearth of food, by the way.

When we have a planet where everyone is fed, where basically there is no unnecessary human suffering, it will still be a world of bodies, therefore it will still be a dream, but it will have become a happy dream. And then we can wake up, which is real different from a lot of those people with the stickers in their bathroom, I love myself, I love myself, I love myself, because it's a real slippery slope to therefore I don't have to engage in the world because it's all an illusion anyway. It's not my karma if a child is starving, et cetera.

Right, Mike?

[Speaker 1] (1:15:30 - 1:19:32)

Right. Yes, so as sometimes happens in people's dreams, in the middle of the dream, they realize they are dreaming. The dream can still continue.

And this is very much when you wake up here, you realize what comes to an end is the identification with form, because you are rooted, I'm using, of course, somewhat different terminology from The Course in Miracles, but you know it's the same thing. So you're rooted in the formless. When you're rooted in the formless, the eternal in yourself, which we can call inner space, which we can call stillness, which we can call pure awareness, when you're rooted in that, then the world of form, not only, as you said, is no longer taken absolutely seriously, I sometimes put it this way, I say it matters, but it does not matter absolutely.

It has an importance, but its importance is relative, it's not absolute. The only absolute importance is whether you know who you are in your essence, and Jesus said that with Mary and Martha, when Martha was running around, getting concerned with all the things that need to be doing, and Mary's only chosen to listen, but that means you have chosen, he said only one thing is ultimately needed, and you have chosen that one thing. So I don't think he said never to do anything again, or work in the kitchen, but to know what is primary, and then what is secondary, tends to unfold with much greater ease, and no longer creates the suffering that is there inevitably when you believe that that's all there is and take it for absolutely real, and everything is deadly serious and matters.

That's why people walk around through life, they're really frightened throughout their life. What's going to happen next? It's the world of form is threatening to them, and the world is perceived as hostile basically, and that's the reason is, and they're trying to rearrange the world so that it's no longer hostile, but it doesn't work.

No matter how you rearrange things, it's still, you feel it as hostile. And so, and then the realization comes, well, it doesn't work that way. You have to first find the peace that is an essential part of who you are beyond form, that's always there, not dependent on time, and then from there, you can deal with the things of the world, give the world of form its due, even participate, but it is no longer that nightmarish thing that it was before when you were trying to get something out of the world to find fulfillment or whatever.

And so, that is perhaps what A Course in Miracles means and what you just mentioned, where as you begin to wake up, it turns into a pleasant dream. It's still the world of form, but it's as you're rooted in being, first of all, you no longer create suffering for yourself because usually your mind is the thing that creates suffering for you and you don't create suffering for others. That's an enormous contribution.

It's a contribution of not adding to the suffering of the world, an enormous thing. So that's the first thing that happens. And then, that's how the world changes, but it becomes a more benign dream.

[Speaker 3] (1:19:33 - 1:22:23)

In A Course in Miracles, when it's talking about the world of form, it says about the world in the illusion form, it's not that it's bad, it's that it's nothing, and that it's holiness or unholiness has to do with the purposes the mind ascribes to it. So when we, I love in the Course when he says, let me use your hands, let me use your feet. When we look at the realm of form with a kind of divine attachment, we are not less invested in what occurs here.

We are invested in love. I love that line, be fully invested in an effort, but not attached to the result. And I think that this is a very important issue because if we get this wrong, it makes the spiritual seeker ineffective in ways that perhaps we do not wish to be.

Look at something like you're here in Canada. You can turn on television. Canada humanitarian aid workers, your servicemen and women are all over the world doing profound work, risking their lives.

That's significant. You don't want to not let that in. You want to let that in deeply because once again, it is a realm of form and a realm of profound power.

Any time our spiritual, to me, any time our spiritual inquiry in any way ignores the suffering of human beings, does not include that as a factor, the unnecessary suffering

of human beings, then perhaps there's a little insidious ego influence that we want to look at there. Yes, I mean, from A Course in Miracles, this perspective, this entire room is filled with illusion. The fact that your body is separate from your body is all an illusion, but that doesn't mean this room is not filled with profound reality, which is the love inside us.

So for me in the realm of form, yes, it's all nothing, but when I got a call, would you like to go be with Eckhart Tolle and do this? And what seems to me the obvious blessing of personal conversation with you as well. It's not like nothing real was going on here.

It's something profoundly real using the realm of form as a teaching device. So that's how I've... Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:22:35 - 1:23:30)

The importance of the present moment, I was telling you earlier, many years ago, I copied from A Course in Miracles all the sayings about the importance of being present. And it says, for example, the closest, the present moment or the holy instant, as it's called, is the closest approximation to eternity that this world offers. So the eternity, of course, is the timeless dimension, not everlasting time.

A Course in Miracles is full of the importance of what I call presence, of the importance of salvation is offered to you in this instant. It just, it says it has taken, it has taken time to misguide you so completely, but it takes no time at all to be who you are.

[Speaker 3] (1:23:30 - 1:23:36)

And the only place where eternity intersects with linear time is in the present moment, which is your...

[Speaker 1] (1:23:36 - 1:23:37)

Yes, yes. Yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:23:38 - 1:23:41)

You've led the world to a profound understanding.

[Speaker 1] (1:23:42 - 1:23:46)

That's the vertical dimension of depths, yeah.

[Speaker 3] (1:23:46 - 1:24:24)

You know, in both the Christian cross and in the Jewish Star of David, the visual symbol is that of the intersecting dimensions of the vertical and the horizontal. And the way A Course in Miracles talks about Jesus, it says he lived on the earth, but thought only the

thoughts of heaven, which takes us back to that, how do you dwell within the realm of form? With your feet planted firmly here, but you're thinking so above this realm that the two intersect divinely and harmoniously and beautifully.

[Speaker 1] (1:24:25 - 1:25:00)

Yes. So you've come since the talk that I listened to in 86 or whenever the talk that you gave. And then, after that for a few years, I didn't hear anything more about, except that I went to a talk you gave because I loved that recorded talk so much.

The following year, you came to London, you gave a talk at the MindBodySpirit Festival and I went there and enjoyed that very much.

[Speaker 3] (1:25:00 - 1:25:01)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:01 - 1:25:02)

You didn't see me, but I saw you.

[Speaker 3] (1:25:03 - 1:25:04)

Although, maybe I did.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:06 - 1:25:43)

Yeah. And then, I didn't hear from Marianne Williamson for a few years and don't know how many years passed. And I had moved from London to Somerset in England.

And one Sunday, in the Sunday paper, the front headline mentioned Marianne Williamson, the big letters. I said, what is this? What's she done?

Do you remember that when suddenly you got out into the world? I think it has something to do with Elizabeth Taylor.

[Speaker 3] (1:25:44 - 1:25:46)

Oh, I thought you were going to say my first book.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:46 - 1:25:50)

No, that came, that came, that wouldn't be in the front page.

[Speaker 3] (1:25:50 - 1:25:50)

Thanks, Edgar.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:50 - 1:25:53)

That wouldn't be the front page of the News of the World.

[Speaker 3] (1:25:54 - 1:25:56)

Well, I was on, I remember in the London Times.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:56 - 1:26:16)

Yeah, no, you were very, suddenly, and then the book came out soon after that. And that first book was a return to, Yes. Wonderful book.

I'm sure many of you have read it and millions of people, I'm sure, have been helped and are continuing to be helped by it.

[Speaker 10] (1:26:16 - 1:26:16)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:16 - 1:26:26)

And so, and then, of course, many more books came after that. And the most recent book, which I haven't read yet, I was very surprised.

[Speaker 3] (1:26:26 - 1:26:29)

You shouldn't read it, because it might have an effect on you that one wouldn't wish for it to have.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:30 - 1:26:30)

No, I wouldn't.

[Speaker 3] (1:26:30 - 1:26:31)

It's about weight loss.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:31 - 1:26:31)

That's right.

[Speaker 3] (1:26:31 - 1:26:32)

So don't read it.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:35 - 1:26:37)

No, I said it on my Skinny Friends.

[Speaker 3] (1:26:37 - 1:26:38)

No, don't read it.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:38 - 1:26:44)

I'll disappear. Which might be a good thing.

[Speaker 3] (1:26:44 - 1:26:46)

I was gonna say, you won't be stopping.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:48 - 1:26:54)

So it's a book about the spiritual aspects of weight loss.

[Speaker 3] (1:26:54 - 1:27:25)

And it, of course, is an extension of the conversation we've been having that the epidemic, I don't know how much Canada is experiencing, but certainly south of here in the United States, we have a very serious problem here. And, of course, that stems from exactly, as the Course in Miracles says, you think you have many different problems, but you really only have one, and that is your separation from God. So the answer is the answer with a capital A, no matter what the form of.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:25 - 1:27:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:27:27 - 1:27:59)

But this idea that when we identify too much with the body, our dense thinking about the body actually is an erroneous perception of the body, which produces dis-ease and dysfunction related to the body. And it is when we see the body as merely a container for light, having been thus reminded in consciousness, it returns the cells themselves to their native intelligence.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:59 - 1:28:00)

Yes, that's right.

[Speaker 3] (1:28:00 - 1:29:25)

So there are cells in our body that know how to keep the lungs breathing and the heart beating, and that same perfection, because we are a perfect idea in the mind of God, that perfect imprint is expressed in every aspect of ourselves. But for people who are dealing with a serious compulsion or even addiction in regards to physical weight, it's

like a breaker switch has gone off. And we are, as the Course in Miracles would say, temporarily inaccessible to the power of the atonement in this one area where the perfect appetites are no longer operative.

The cells of the nervous system, the cells in the brain have literally been knocked out of their native knowing. And so, knowing that everything that you talk about is the answer no matter what the problem, achieving that pure state of consciousness that you speak of, takes, literally takes pressure off the body and gives the body an opportunity to heal. The Course in Miracles says the body heals when we're not looking at it.

And that all disease or dysfunction of the body arises from over-identification with the body. So this book, of course, in Weight Loss and Spiritual Lessons in Surrendering Weight, is taking this spiritual inquiry and applying it specifically to the issue of problems with one's body and weight.

[Speaker 1] (1:29:26 - 1:29:31)

And that could, of course, apply to other forms of addiction also.

[Speaker 3] (1:29:31 - 1:31:36)

Absolutely correct. It just seems to me that when it comes to drugs and alcohol, it is part of the mainstream conversation, whether someone has gone to a 12-step meeting or not, it is part of the mainstream understanding that it is a spiritual disease that needs a spiritual solution. I mean, that's kind of been part of the cultural jargon about the 12-step.

And even though Overeaters Anonymous exists and is a fine program, it doesn't seem to me that the issue of the spiritual problem and the spiritual answer has quite saturated the popular conversation about weight yet. It tends to be more on the level of effect, diets and exercise. And they could be great diets that absolutely work and great exercise programs that absolutely work.

The deeper problem is our inability to stay on the diet or sometimes so painfully for people, the diet did work, the exercise did work, but within a certain amount of time, the subconscious force of the addiction or compulsion just comes right back. So there's only one truth spoken many different ways and I don't think any of this is so much something that we don't already know by now. That path towards the 51% and you're a large part of this.

The Course in Miracles says enlightenment begins as an abstract intellectual construct and it makes its journey without distance. So I believe enough of us actually for a tipping point get it intellectually. We've all read the same books by now.

We've all listened to the same tapes. So in a way, and you're a perfect example of this,

someone didn't come here today so much to hear something they didn't already know. People are here to access more deeply those things which by now we do already know.

And the era of data collection is over, I think.

[Speaker 1] (1:31:37 - 1:31:38)

That's a good saying.

[Speaker 3] (1:31:38 - 1:31:54)

I have to remember to quote you. And I think you are one of the few on the planet. I'm not saying this to pander.

One gets more than information. One gets a transmission listening to you and it's truly an honor to be in your presence and to learn from you. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:31:54 - 1:33:32)

Thank you. I'd just like to ask one question to your view on because I'm often asked that question and I'll tell you my general perception. It's, I know you were very much supported President Obama during the elections.

And often people ask me, how do you feel now about President Obama? And I still have to say, the underlying state of consciousness that he represents is so vastly more awakened than what preceded him and what surrounds him. And that still applies.

I think I still have a feeling that there's an underlying state of consciousness that is more evolved than what we've seen before and what is around him. On the level of form, which does not mean that he is free of mistakes. And from the beginning, I thought, why cannot he see that Afghanistan is not going to work, but I hope I'm wrong.

How do you see it now after a couple of years, him in relation to the country as a whole and the world as a whole? What is his function? Is he being dragged down or is he still able to, in your view, to remain conscious while dealing with all these unconscious forces?

[Speaker 3] (1:33:35 - 1:35:04)

I don't want to have a codependent relationship with Barack Obama. I don't want to always be basing my views on what his potential is. He's responsible for his actions.

I passionately supported the president and the way his administration has unfolded, I have come to believe that you simply cannot put new wine in old bottles. And in the United States, the Democratic and Republican Party have a lock on the narrative. And within that conversation, I have begun to doubt whether or not the kind of profound

transformational shifts that we were led to believe, the president believed in during the campaign can occur.

I'm disappointed. I'm disappointed. And as a woman, I think that's part of what we learn in relationships.

At a certain point, what you do is what matters, not what you say or what I think in your heart you really believe. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:35:04 - 1:35:04)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (1:35:04 - 1:35:05)

He's an adult.

[Speaker 1] (1:35:06 - 1:35:15)

Yes. Of course, what your expression was, the Democrats and the Republicans have something about the narrative.

[Speaker 3] (1:35:15 - 1:38:17)

There's a lock on the narrative. And that goes back to what you and I were saying earlier about the state of humanity, the state of everywhere. And this is not just in the United States.

This is really Western civilization and actually global civilization to some extent. You see it everywhere. This new conversation bubbling up.

You see it in education. You see it in the arts. You see it in politics.

You see it in spirituality. In politics, it's an old conversation. It doesn't allow for the bubbling up of this spiritual renaissance that is trying to occur.

And it's too powerful, a segment of our collective expression of power to be ignored. And therefore, and yet for me as an American looking at this last election, well, not this very last one, but before where the Democrats got the House, the Senate, the White House. See, I'm of a generation that still remembers a great moral force at the center of the Democratic Party in the United States.

I remember Bobby Kennedy and I remember Martin Luther King. And the way I see it, we're now living at a time where one major political party in the United States sees the desperate amount of human suffering on the planet and they say, well, it's really sad,

but it's not government's job to fix it. And if the private sector does something about it, that's great.

The other major political party, which I grew up believing saw addressing that suffering, the suffering of the oppressed, the injustice that so many people endure as the core of its reason for being there, now has become, at least in its current behavioral patterns, a party that looks at all that suffering, does what it can to ameliorate it on the periphery, but if we are honest with ourselves, is not fundamentally addressing the underlying causes that make all that suffering inevitable. And I don't know how the Canadian system works, but in the United States, our first president, George Washington, warned us about political parties.

There's nothing in the Constitution. So in the United States, third-party involvement has been extremely important. Abolition came from the abolitionist party.

Women's suffrage came from the suffrage party. Social Security came from the socialist party. So I am, it is, as they say in AA, it is about principle, not personality.

I don't care how cool that personality is. Something is rotten and it's not being fixed and I'm a mother and I'm too concerned about our planet and my country and all of our great-grandchildren to be willing to act patient when patience is perhaps not the virtue that it might appear to be.

[Speaker 1] (1:38:17 - 1:38:47)

Yes, so there is a rising new consciousness, but some structures that have been around for a long time and egoically created by the collective ego, some structures cannot perhaps be reached sufficiently by the rising new consciousness for them to change, to become instruments for change. And that might also apply to many economic structures, banking and so on.

[Speaker 3] (1:38:47 - 1:38:55)

Absolutely, and that is the question where we are right now. And for myself personally, I'm new wine.

[Speaker 1] (1:38:56 - 1:38:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:38:56 - 1:38:57)

It really can't be put in those old bottles.

[Speaker 1] (1:38:58 - 1:38:59)

Yes, that's right.

[Speaker 3] (1:38:59 - 1:39:02)

And that's how- Form was never meant to be permanent.

[Speaker 1] (1:39:02 - 1:39:35)

Oh no, and especially at this time as there's an enormous power behind the rising of the new consciousness. And already we saw how the monolithic structure of Soviet communism collapsed because it was so rigid, nothing new could reach it. And so what then is really, we are destined to see is the eventual collapse of those structures in this transformational period on the planet, that those structures that cannot be reached, they cannot survive.

[Speaker 3] (1:39:36 - 1:40:13)

And then it takes us back to the concern about human suffering. You're right, they'll fall. But do they fall through tender care and careful midwifing?

Or do they fall chaotically and with harm that might not have been there had the new not been midwifed more consciously? That seems to me to be the right conversation. And then every individual has to ask for themselves, what part do I play?

Both conceptually and in terms of our behavior.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:13 - 1:41:04)

Yes, yes. And just coming just a little bit to your own evolutionary journey as you, The Course in Miracles was a decisive transformation for you when you discovered that. So that was the beginning of your, for most people, awakening is a process, the awakening process, I call it.

And so this has been going on for you since you discovered The Course in Miracles whenever it was 30 years ago. And how do you feel in your present evolutionary process here, peace is arising more and more in your life?

[Speaker 3] (1:41:05 - 1:41:16)

I had this question that was like a boulder in the road for me. And I think you answered it for me today.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:16 - 1:41:17)

Yeah.

[Speaker 3] (1:41:17 - 1:41:20)

So I'm feeling quite grateful.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:20 - 1:41:21)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:41:21 - 1:41:22)

Thank you for that.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:22 - 1:41:36)

Yes, good, good. Thank you. Marianne has a weekly class, if anybody is in LA.

Where?

[Speaker 3] (1:41:37 - 1:41:48)

At a place called the Regent Theater right now that might be moving at some point. So if someone looks at my website, www.marianne.com, the information is there.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:49 - 1:41:55)

Yeah, weekly class and you discuss, you talk about a lesson in The Course in Miracles, usually how to apply it.

[Speaker 3] (1:41:55 - 1:42:02)

Or some situation in life with the perspective. Like you, Eckhart, I try my best to listen and then whatever.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:03 - 1:42:08)

And I am going to read your book anyway, The Weight Loss Book.

[Speaker 3] (1:42:08 - 1:42:13)

Thank you. Just don't do the lessons, okay?

[Speaker 1] (1:42:15 - 1:42:17)

Maybe you shouldn't do it either.

[Speaker 3] (1:42:18 - 1:42:19)

Well, I did them, that was kind of the point.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:24 - 1:42:31)

Marianne doesn't seem to have aged because I remember seeing photos of her from 20 years ago and she looked exactly the same then as she does now.

[Speaker 3] (1:42:31 - 1:42:32)

Well, my clothes are on.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:51 - 1:43:22)

Well, it's been just wonderful to sit with you and you've brought The Course in Miracles perhaps to so many people who otherwise would not have been open to it. And I think, I'm sure for many others, they too have been very open to it. They took it from you rather than going to The Course because you've kind of, in some ways, you have translated The Course in Miracles to make it more accessible to people.

[Speaker 3] (1:43:23 - 1:43:42)

I'm like the Russian literature professor, I'm not Dostoevsky. So I think, I always look at my book, A Return to Love, I see it as like the Cliff Notes of A Course in Miracles. But obviously, you don't just attend the Russian Lit class, you read the Russian novel.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:42 - 1:44:40)

I used for about two or three years, I used The Course in Miracles as a teaching device also in small seminars and workshops. So I still love it and picked it up again last night because I knew we were going to meet here today. And it's just, it's always fresh and new and every line is inspiring.

It's not for everybody, as you know, and as The Course in Miracles itself says. No, it's only one version of the universal curriculum, which is, as in the words of A Course in Miracles, the universal curriculum is the evolutionary path for all human beings, which is the same. And there are different versions of it and The Course in Miracles is one.

So if it's for you, you will know it probably when you pick it up and start reading it. And if it's not, that's fine.

[Speaker 3] (1:44:40 - 1:44:55)

I think it's so beautiful. One of the ways you can tell something is true with a capital T is if it dovetails with everything else you know is true. That's what's so beautiful about the multifaceted nature of the universal curriculum.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:55 - 1:46:47)

Yes, it's a wonderful thing being able to recognize the truth, the essential truth, no matter in what form it appears. That I couldn't do that until this inner transformation

occurred in me. Before that, I could only see the differences in the different teachings.

They looked so different. There's the Christian teaching and there's the Buddhist and Hindu and then other Course in Miracles. I wasn't able to see that they're all one.

And after the awakening that I experienced, I still remember picking up an old copy of the New Testament at my mother's place. I was visiting my mother and there was an old copy, New Testament, which the Jehovah's Witnesses had given her, although she didn't want it. But it was there waiting for me.

And so I picked it up and I suddenly saw the deeper truth that's in the, although some of it has come down to us in a distorted way, but even beyond, I could still see the power behind the teaching and the deeper truth to which it pointed. And then a little later, I saw it in the Bhagavad Gita and the same, this all points to the same fundamental truth that's there. And then there's an inner recognition that says, yes.

And of course, whatever it says, you know it already, although you might not have been able to formulate it, but then you see it reflected. The same listening to a teacher who teaches from that deep place of realization. Immediately, I still love listening to other spiritual teachers.

When it's teaching that truly comes from that deep place, because it's such joy to listen to it in somewhat different form, the same truth.

[Speaker 3] (1:46:47 - 1:47:28)

Universal spiritual themes is the course. I was giving a talk in New York City with Robert Thurman, Professor Thurman, who is really the foremost North American Tibetan Buddhist, right? And so he was supposed, it was on Buddha and Christ from the Course in Miracles perspective.

And so he was going to talk about Buddha, and then I was going to talk about Christ as in the context of A Course in Miracles. So he spoke, and then they said, okay, Marianne, tell us now about Christ. I said, everything he just said.

It's been called a Christian Vedanta actually by the man who scribed it, yes. Bill Thepford, who said that of A Course in Miracles.

[Speaker 1] (1:47:29 - 1:47:32)

Christian Vedanta. Ah, Christian Vedanta, oh, that's interesting, yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:47:32 - 1:47:36)

And here's the Jew, so, you know, it's all one truth.

[Speaker 1] (1:47:37 - 1:47:46)

Yes, and other forms of Christian teachings that not the conventional Christian teachings, do you know Joel Goldsmith?

[Speaker 3] (1:47:46 - 1:48:17)

Of course, Joel Goldsmith, and I think a lot of what Elaine Pagels wrote about in the Nag Hammadi manuscripts and the Gnostic Gospels, there's more and more of an understanding that A Course in Miracles belongs in a broader category of the Gnostic mystical Christian tradition, which it's kind of interesting because you look at A Course in Miracles and then you look at a lot of traditional Christian interpretation, and you see 80%'s the same, and then, boy, where it deviates 20% is huge.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:17 - 1:49:00)

Yes, yes. Joel Goldsmith to me is the, is really a Christian version of what in India is called Advaita, which means non-duality teaching, because he uses Christian terminology, but it all points to the absolute non-duality of life. And Advaita teachings have become very popular in the West in the last few years.

There's only one, there's only God, and it's the oneness of all life, and to some extent, A Course in Miracles is also pointing continuously to oneness.

[Speaker 3] (1:49:00 - 1:49:14)

Sure, because nothing else exists. If you're, God is all, and what is all-encompassing can have no opposite. So when you're thinking without love, which is God, you're actually not thinking, you're hallucinating, which, once again, is like Buddhism.

It's all maya, it's all illusion.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:14 - 1:49:58)

Yes. The one obstacle that is common for people is that I've seen it with people who are drawn to Advaita teachings, the Indian non-duality. They begin to believe, they believe that the belief in non-duality is the realization of non-duality.

And then they stop there. And so there are people who teach Advaita, they have become maybe even quite well-known teachers, and they teach from intellectual level. They have mastered the terminology of non-duality, and they can answer any questions by applying the terminology of non-duality, and it sounds quite convincing.

[Speaker 3] (1:49:59 - 1:50:03)

But it hasn't trickled down from their head. They're still triggered when their mother

calls.

[Speaker 1] (1:50:03 - 1:50:07)

That's exactly it, exactly. And so, very good.

[Speaker 3] (1:50:07 - 1:50:08)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:50:09 - 1:50:31)

And so, a good criterion you can have is after you've listened to it, it doesn't feel good in here. Something in here tells you that's not it. You can feel it here.

There are some Advaita teachers who have realized, and then it's a true teaching. But if it's only an intellectual realization, basically it's a fallacy.

[Speaker 3] (1:50:33 - 1:50:34)

You passed the test.

[Speaker 1] (1:50:43 - 1:50:44)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (1:50:44 - 1:50:45)

Thank you so much.

[Speaker 1] (1:50:46 - 1:50:56)

Thank you, Marianne. Thank you. Maybe just a little moment of stillness.

Thank you.

[Speaker 10] (1:53:34 - 1:54:20)

Eckhart, I've heard you make reference to a number of situations which I think convey the same idea. You've talked about certain cultures that go through a stage where this thought process becomes more developed, which I interpret in some ways as being almost a loss of innocence. Is it necessary for a culture or a stage of civilization to go through this process of losing innocence, of getting trapped in the thoughts and emotional process in order then to regain the development of awareness to reach a stage of enlightenment?

[Speaker 1] (1:54:21 - 2:14:00)

Thank you. Thank you. Okay.

That seems to be the process when we look at it. So there are still remnants of ancient cultures, very few these days, who have not gone through that process of loss of innocence or loss of connectedness with being, we could call it, the natural connectedness with being. And a few humans may still have it, very simple people, perhaps who live close to the land, never left, or very simple people sometimes still have it in some cultures, a natural connectedness with the root of life, with being.

They feel they are rooted in themselves and there's a stillness there. That is the natural. So what is happening when you lose it, whether it's an individual or whether it's a whole culture, a whole civilization, when you lose it, then you get lost in problem-making, get lost in mind, it's a loss of original innocence, you could say, which, of course, is replaced by what is called in Christianity, original sin, which simply means the dysfunction that we all inherit that is there in the collective. So the original innocence is replaced by the original sin. Original innocence, however, is much deeper than original sin.

Original innocence is always still there, even when original sin comes in, it only covers up the original innocence. It does not destroy the original innocence. So the original innocence remains and then a human being, either an individual or a whole nation, culture, tribe moves through the phase of being identified with mind, ego, thinking, problem-making, conflict-ridden, suffering life, suffering, inflicting suffering on other humans around you, continuous violence, and so on.

All that is part of the loss of connectedness with being. That's why so many ancient cultures and the innocent state, we once were in that. Many ancient myths exist in different cultures throughout the world that speak of the golden age, something, a time when everything was beautiful.

We have it in Indian mythology. At the beginning, humans, they say, lived in connectedness. I'm paraphrasing, but they were one with life, one with the divine.

There were no, they didn't inflict suffering on others. There was no violence. There was, that was, and many cultures have that myth still.

It survived as a myth. It's also expressed, of course, in the Bible, at the beginning of the Bible, like a paradise, the loss of paradise. And paradise, of course, is not a place.

It's a state. So the loss, is it necessary? Well, it's happening.

It has happened and is happening. So it seems to be an evolutionary process when innocence is regained, connectedness with being is regained. It is not the same as the state, as that state that was lost.

And that perhaps is why it is necessary to go through the state of being lost. When it is

regained, it is regained at a deeper level. There's a great deepening.

Innocence is there, but from natural innocence, you now go to conscious innocence. You're fully conscious of your state rather than living in natural. For example, this is reflected in your relationship with nature.

As your consciousness changes, first, let's say, in the innocent state, there's a oneness with nature and a respect for nature as the old civilization said, as the Native Americans had, a respect for nature. They recognized nature as alive with spirit force. They recognized that the tree is not just a dead object that I can use for making money or for my benefit or to build a house or whatever.

They recognized the tree is alive with something more than what you see. And they respected that life. And every animal, even if they had to kill an animal, they respected the life that is in the spirit, presence in the animal.

So everything, they inhabited a universe that was alive with presence. Now, then we lost that. And more and more, we began to inhabit a universe that we were, we deadened ourselves to the aliveness of the universe.

We can't see it anymore. So that we ended up looking at the whole of nature as a utilitarian thing to be used, but no longer recognized the essential aliveness that is in everything in nature. Why couldn't we recognize it anymore, that it is essentially sacred and essentially one with the life that we are because we had lost that within ourselves.

We had cut ourselves off from the root of being, we were completely trapped in mind and then nature became dead and we could then exploit it, do anything because we didn't know that there was a sacred, there's a sacred presence there. We've lost the sacred presence within ourselves. Well, it was covered up.

Then we regain it. Then again, nature is alive, but this time there is the added dimension of conscious awareness. When you've always lived in oneness with nature, you don't even know that you live in oneness with nature.

It's totally natural. But when you do it with full consciousness, there is an added dimension to it. And so this is what's happening.

And this, it seems to be why the process is that we have to move through the stage of being lost and then regaining. Perhaps the truth of that is expressed in the parable of the prodigal son, which is, goes, predates actually, it's been, it's used in the, in various cultures, predates even Jesus, when Jesus used it. It exists in different forms.

The son of a rich father says to the father, give me my inheritance. I want to go out and make a life for myself. And so the father says, okay, you go out into the world.

And the son goes out in the world, squanders his wealth, becomes a destitute and becomes a beggar, and even forgets where he comes from. And then eventually the father sends messengers to the son to remind him who he is. Don't you remember that you are, and the beggar says, no, me, the son of the king?

No, don't. And gradually the memory comes back to him. And then he goes, comes back to his father's house.

And the father now loves him more than before. That's the story. So there's a deepening, what that parable means, there's a deepening after you've been lost.

When you regain that which has been lost, it is regained at a deeper level because there is, you're now fully conscious of it. There's a conscious dimension, the awareness that is there. That's why that seems to be our destiny.

But perhaps there is no, I just know that this is how it is. There may be exceptions. There may be certain people on the planet or small groups of people who don't go through it.

Who knows? We'll have to see. I can only see the general trend, the general movement seems to be, yes, we have to go through that.

There may well be exceptions to that. There may well be certain people who remain in the state of innocence and that is wonderful too. I don't know.

So that's the paradise regained. That is the cycle. And so I know that I had to go through it.

You had to go through it or are still going through it. And so the state of innocence is lost in childhood. Every child is still born with it, but then very quickly these days it is lost.

Well, not, it's never lost. It's obscured. That's the journey.

I have some questions here. And we also have some spoken questions. I'll start with one or two written questions.

Okay. My husband holds extremely different political views from mine. He believes in war, guns, Fox News, and Sarah Palin.

I do not. How do I constructively handle our differences? That's a good challenge.

For being not identified with mental positions. And that could be your practice. Viewpoints, opinions, our own mental, better say mental position means of course every mental position is a thought.

The thought says this is how it is, some kind of judgment or perspective on things. To be identified with a mental position is to derive your sense of self from that mental position.

It's a substitute identity, form identity, ego, substitute for the true identity, which is formless and has nothing to do with any thought, but is consciousness itself.

So that's a good opportunity then for not giving up your thoughts. You're not required to watch Fox News. But if he watches Fox News and the sound is there filling the house, you can either ask him to turn it down or close the door or surrender to what is, or walk out or ask him to walk out.

There are many choices other than negativity. The main thing is mental positions to withdraw your identification so you can still have your position, but there's no self in it anymore. It does not supply your sense of identity.

Then you can allow somebody else to have their mental position. And perhaps you can then discover that beyond both these, your and your husband's mental positions, there's something beyond where you are not in conflict, beyond all his thoughts and your thoughts. Maybe you can find that place, but your first responsibility is not to identify with the position.

And everybody has to practice that one way or another. It's a beautiful practice. It's expressed in Zen.

I don't remember who said it, who first said it. Some Zen master said, don't seek for the truth, just seize cherishing opinions. And that's enough, because many people spiritually inclined, they look for the truth.

Hopefully at some point within, at first it starts outside. But don't look for the truth, not even within, just stop cherishing opinions. That's the cherishing, not having.

Doesn't say stop having opinions, because that would be difficult. Maybe very advanced practice. But even I have some opinions about Fox News and so on.

But cherishing means to identify with the opinion and to be in the thought. And then it gives you your sense of I. And then anybody who has a different or conflicting position, it becomes a kind of enemy.

And both are trapped in form. And the other is probably trapped also in the form of thought forms. This is a very common human condition, trapped in thought forms.

They're all, most humans still on the planet, derive their identity from their thoughts. So the thought is invested with self. This is perhaps another way of speaking about the essential truth of the Buddha, who discovered that this sense of self is an illusion.

An illusory, you derive your sense of self from form, because every thought is a form, a thought form. It's an energy field. It has some form, not physical form.

So this is really, if this were your only spiritual practice, would be enough to withdraw

identification from positions, thoughts. And so then, if you can try, for example, talking to the questioner, your husband then can become your spiritual teacher because he can continuously remind you not to be identified with mental positions. And then you don't resist the other person's mental position.

You don't need to. You allow it to be. You can even allow your own mental position to be.

If you resist somebody else's mental position, you only strengthen it. Try arguing with him about Fox News or Sarah Palin, then you'll see what I mean. And you may find the miracle that it can happen quite easily or can happen, that somebody's mental position either weakens as a mental position.

It's not that strong anymore because you're not resisting it. It may even dissolve when it's not resisted because it needs resistance to strengthen itself and to continue to gain energy through fighting the other. It's quite miraculous to see how it can happen when it's not resisted, allowed.

Oh, well, I know that's what you think. That's okay. Okay.

Don't explain the practice that you're doing. Just do it. Because if you start to explain to a person who is still identified or which means trapped in ego, what I'm practicing with you, because you have a big ego, is being egoless.

That won't work. Just do it. Don't need to say it.

Just.

[Speaker 7] (2:14:26 - 2:15:38)

Okay, so my question actually concerns my mother. My mother's actually been through quite a bit and quite a bit of suffering. And I guess just some main things would be losing two of her sons, one at the age of eight in a traumatic accident, coming to America and having the people that she trusted abandon her.

Suffering a brain tumor, being on like seven pills a day, severe emotional abuse. And you talk about how suffering often breaks open the shell of the ego. And it really seems that my mom's even more attached to thinking and more strongly identified with her ego.

And it's almost like she's a very gentle and kind person, but it seems like she's always lost in her thoughts. And they're not always bad thoughts, but if you, like you do the impressions of people who are lost in thought where they're like always looking around and you say something and they go, okay. And so that's basically what happens.

And so I'm not exactly sure how to approach it because I mean, it's just a fairly different situation.

[Speaker 1] (2:15:40 - 2:18:02)

Yes. Thank you. So you don't know what to do.

Yes. Well, I would say there's nothing you can do except be with her, be present with her. And what she can't do for herself, you can do for her.

So she cannot be at this moment yet. She cannot be there, the presence for her mind. She cannot have the awareness that is aware of what her mind is doing.

Her mind, she's identified with deep seated forms of conditioning and probably pain body. Perhaps collective pain body is part of it. People, I don't know what country was she born in.

India. Yeah. So it could well be that collective pain body is part of it.

Every country also has its pain body and the individual's pain body is partly part of the collective pain body. You have to supply the awareness that she at this time is lacking. So usually what we tell the person to do or there's not a doing is just be aware of your mind.

Be the witness of your mind. Be there as the witnessing consciousness so that you become aware of your mind patterns so that you're no longer totally trapped in your mind patterns. Now, if you tell that to her, that probably won't work.

Maybe you've tried. I have. So you probably said, can you be there as a witnessing consciousness?

And she said.

[Speaker 7] (2:18:08 - 2:18:23)

I mean, I've tried to be there for her. I mean, and maybe she might be complaining about something and I'll just listen and she'll say, what are you doing just sitting there and listening? It's just.

Well, then you say, I hear what you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (2:18:27 - 2:20:30)

I'm listening. I'm just listening. It's fine.

I'm just, I'm listening what you're saying. It's good. So don't, you can be the secondary awareness because if she can't do it, somebody is close to you.

Hold the aware presence for her, so to speak. Don't ask for any results. It's not a means to some end.

It's a satisfying and kind and beautiful and healing thing to do. If we use the word do, it's not really a doing. You hold the presence, the aware presence while her mind is doing what it does and her emotional body is doing what it does.

Instead of thinking, she shouldn't be going through all this. Stop doing that. Why doesn't she allow her to do what she does in the same way that you would allow your mind to do what it does, but just being aware?

Be there as the awareness. Hold the space of awareness for her. You hear that?

Now, she's Indian. That may be, there may be some opening in her. I've observed in Indian people, even people who are on the surface, completely identified with their minds or materialistic.

In many, many Indian people, there is an opening somewhere towards spirituality. It may be hidden, but it's there. Well, there is an opening, not in everyone, but the opening is potentially there in everyone.

But there's something that perhaps she can respond to within the tradition of Indian spirituality. Does she have any kind of practice?

[Speaker 7] (2:20:31 - 2:20:51)

It might just be an external, outward practice. Well, she does. She says that she does meditate before she sleeps because it calms her down.

Otherwise, she's always thinking about things, and sometimes she just doesn't sleep the entire night. But she says she tries to meditate. She doesn't always succeed at it, but she tries.

[Speaker 1] (2:20:52 - 2:21:25)

Well, that's a start. Perhaps you can tell her that she can also meditate just for a few seconds or half a minute in normal life. Perhaps you can ask her whether she can feel the energy inside her hands.

She may not want to do that, but you can try a few things, but mainly be there as the presence. Now, don't say I've been doing that for years and it hasn't worked.

[Speaker 7] (2:21:29 - 2:22:03)

I mean, I have, I mean, I tried to introduce her to the teachings, and one of the things that I noticed is she takes lots of medication, and some of it's stuff like steroid medication, and just lots of medication that affect her focus. So she can't really focus very well on maybe her hands or her breath. So I mean, I'm not sure.

I mean, she has to take those medications to live. So, I mean, with all that brain fog and everything, I mean, do you think that there's any hope? I mean, is it just consistently suffering?

[Speaker 1] (2:22:05 - 2:27:44)

It's just, she can't surrender to life. She's not able to do it, but you have to do it for her. Let's see, when this is the only way for humans who are not ready yet, the humans that are close to you, you have not surrendered yet for her, but you can do that.

If you were surrendered for her, it would be fine. You would be at peace. And if any healing is possible, it will happen in that way.

It can come through you, but you need to surrender to what the way she is now, complete acceptance. With complete acceptance comes an energy field of peace. With the energy field of peace comes the possibility of grace and healing.

But when you surrender, you don't surrender as a means to an end. You don't surrender in order for her to get better. That's not true surrender.

You just surrender to the way. I had to do it for my mother. My mother, occasionally I try to point her to the present moment or feeling the energy in her body.

Once or twice, she had brief moments of stillness and you can suddenly feel light coming through, aliveness coming through. Some years ago, she was visiting me. She was still alive 10 years ago or so.

And I remember she was visiting me and talking and talking and talking and talking about her. I had forgotten how much humans talk because I was living alone at the time. And her mind never stopped and just problems.

And I simply, I knew all I could do was be there as the aware presence for her. And after four or five days, for a minute, she stopped talking. And there was a moment of stillness.

And after the moment of stillness, she said something that wasn't part of her usual record that was playing itself again and again and again. After the moment of stillness, she looked at me and said, "'Isn't it strange we are born and then we die?'" That's a deep insight. It's just the beginning of all philosophy, the beginning of all spiritual quest."

And she had that. The strangeness of our short-lived sensory, physical existence. Before she was totally identified with it and after also, but there was a momentary opening.

"'Isn't it strange we are born?'" I mean, that's a moment of grace." And then the clouds came back. And they stayed until the end, unfortunately.

I had to surrender to that without demanding that my mother should awaken spiritually. I

surrendered to the fact that that was where she was at. And it became very painful as the years passed.

Her body became more and more dysfunctional and she became more and more unhappy with it. She regarded old age as a personal misfortune that she was afflicted with. And I tried to tell her, "It is not personal.

It's old age. It happens to everybody.' She says, "Yes, but not in this way. Not like that.

It's terrible." It was the pain she generated, psychological pain was far greater than the discomfort and pain she suffered on the physical level. And the fear of what might happen to her, the fear of not being able to walk at all anymore, the fear of losing her eyesight, the fear of this, the fear of that, far greater suffering than any physical suffering that she suffered. And yet, except for one or two rare moments, there was no transformation.

And I was at peace with it. I surrendered. I allowed her to be the way she is, to manifest that state of consciousness.

And I could sense the being underneath that. I can sense that. If you can sense that being that is underneath all the density, the emotional density of the mind, and hold that, the rest is surrender.

I did not succeed except I surrendered. So, since I did not succeed with my mother in any other way, I cannot give you any more advice than that. I myself couldn't do it.

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 9] (2:28:02 - 2:28:02)

Hi, Eckhart.

[Speaker 11] (2:28:03 - 2:28:03)

Hi.

[Speaker 9] (2:28:04 - 2:28:24)

My question is, when I try to maintain presence in my everyday life, I'm aware that my subconscious need for superiority sabotages me pretty regularly, and it happens very often. So I wonder what suggestions you have.

[Speaker 1] (2:28:27 - 2:28:33)

It would be nice for us to have one or two examples of how that looks.

[Speaker 9] (2:28:35 - 2:29:19)

I was afraid you would ask that. Well, typically when, like this morning, someone approached me, and they were anxious and worried and off balance, and I thought, it's sort of an automatic thing, sort of, you know, why don't you get your act together? And rather than just having a positive exchange, and then I notice, of course, when I'm anxious or off balance, I want everybody to be kind and understanding.

So it's, I judge that as not a good thing. I would like to be more automatically kind. Okay.

[Speaker 1] (2:29:23 - 2:29:25)

One more example, perhaps?

[Speaker 9] (2:29:25 - 2:30:07)

One more? Okay, when my question was chosen, and I was invited to be here, I was really excited about that, and it was tempting to think, and it was kind of my first thought that, oh, isn't this wonderful? I have this great question, but, you know, I quickly realized that in reality, that it might be a pertinent question, but it's not about me, and it's not, it doesn't mean that I'm great.

No, that was, okay. So it seems like a constant fight for me.

[Speaker 1] (2:30:09 - 2:34:11)

Well, of course, it's very normal, that kind of mind activity. It's just, as awareness arises, it seems to be more of a problem than it would be for a normally unconscious person. Now, the good thing is that the awareness is there of it.

If you were totally unconscious, that is, identified with those thought patterns, you wouldn't even know it, because the essence of identification is you don't know it. You are it. You are the thought.

So you would, then, instead of feeling superior and realizing that you feel superior, and then not wanting to feel superior, you would just feel superior. And that would be really unconscious. And that would be quite normal.

Now, because awareness arises, that's a good thing. You're aware of certain mind patterns, subtle things where you feel superior or special. It's another word for it, that's specialness.

Because specialness doesn't, superior always implies better than. Specialness could also be, I'm much worse off than you. That's why I'm so special.

My problems are much bigger than yours. Don't tell me about your problems. I'll let me tell you about mine.

Or as my dad used to say, when people said, I have a headache, or whatever ache that you have a headache, I've had a headache for weeks. That's not so much superiority, but well, in a way it is, it's specialness. I'm more special than you because I have more headaches than you.

I must be more interesting, or whatever the reasoning behind it is. It's irrational, of course. So awareness is there, which is a decisive factor.

It has come in. The awareness is aware of that mind pattern. Then, however, the awareness is obscured again by an additional mind pattern that says I shouldn't be having these thoughts, which are more thoughts.

So we have three things here in operation. There's the original thought pattern, harmless as it may be, but there's a recognition of the thought pattern, which comes from the fact that there's awareness. Through awareness, the thought pattern is recognized.

But then the mind comes in again. It uses the awareness, the recognition that arose through awareness to construct an additional level of problems, which says I shouldn't be having those thoughts. I'm not a good person anymore if I have those thoughts.

I'm not kind if I have those thoughts. And what is that? Thoughts.

So it can happen that as awareness arises, which is a wonderful thing, you're not totally identified with the mind pattern anymore. And then the mind is so cunning that out of that recognition, it creates new mind patterns. And the new mind patterns say, I'm not a kind person if I think that.

I mustn't think, I feel bad about thinking that. I shouldn't. By now, I should be rid of that, whatever it says.

So that's where you have to be careful just to become aware that the mind has come in again after the awareness. That is not necessary. But you didn't know that.

That was unconscious. So the mind has little, it's very cunning. You recognize the mind there, and then the mind comes back in again and uses your recognition to manufacture more thought out of that.

Ha, ha, ha.

[Speaker 10] (2:34:12 - 2:34:16)

Ha, ha, ha. Ha, ha, ha. Ha, ha, ha.

Ha, ha, ha. Ha, ha, ha. Right.

Ha, ha, ha.

[Speaker 1] (2:34:17 - 2:34:26)

Ha, ha, ha. And this is why it's very good to ask that question. It helps everybody, so you are special.

[Speaker 10] (2:34:27 - 2:34:28)

Ha, ha, ha. Ha, ha, ha. Ha, ha, ha.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:34:29 - 2:35:50)

Ha, ha, ha. But of course, everybody has similar problems, so we are all special. Ha, ha, ha.

Ha, ha, ha. The, that's where you, once you're aware of that, you can then recognize that as unnecessary. You don't need that.

It's superfluous mind activity that does nothing except strengthen your mind. So, and then you can simply allow the recognition to be there without the additional mental judgment of let's say something wrong with you. And that in itself gradually dissolves the power of the mind pattern.

All you need is the awareness of what your mind is doing. And gradually, what your mind is doing becomes less dense, less powerful, and the awareness grows. So there's a shrinking of the mind pattern and a growing of the awareness.

The only way the mind can stop that pattern is by, as I said, by coming in after the awareness and creating more thought around that. So just be happy with being aware. It's a mind pattern.

It's nothing to do with who you are. You don't, you're not an unkind person. You're not whatever the mind says.

It's just this, that mind pattern. Isn't that interesting? There it is.

And that is in itself sufficient.

[Speaker 9] (2:35:52 - 2:35:54)

Great, thank you so much.

[Speaker 4] (2:36:12 - 2:36:38)

Probably my question is gonna be redundant and silly one you don't have to answer it if you think it's redundant. My suffering has decreased by far. But I still feel frustrated with

the return of pain body whenever it comes.

And I know it's much less, much shorter and weaker and everything. And I try to not resist it, but I still do feel frustrated. And any comment?

[Speaker 1] (2:36:39 - 2:36:40)

Frustrated with?

[Speaker 4] (2:36:40 - 2:37:16)

With the return of pain body. And when I see myself reacting to whatever event it is, I have put these notes everywhere in my car, house, everywhere. But you know, if I don't turn around and the pain body comes back then, I catch it very often in the middle of the attack and I just leave wherever I am.

And I go to this silent place. I try to say, okay, it's okay. Just to be compassionate toward myself.

Yet I do get frustrated after it happened again. And yeah.

[Speaker 1] (2:37:17 - 2:37:59)

Well, that's lovely. Well, it's wonderful to see that there's already so much disidentification from the pain body in you. Maybe not enough yet for your, what you demand of yourself, of course, is complete freedom from the pain body.

But there's already a lot of detachment coming in. Does the awakening come in, in the middle of being taken over by a pain body reaction sometimes, as you said, in the middle of it? And then what do you do?

What happens?

[Speaker 4] (2:38:00 - 2:38:42)

If I'm shouting, then I just stop. And then I say, okay, just leave. And then I just leave, which is quite often with my poor son and his six.

And then I just try to leave the, wherever I am. And of course, he doesn't want me to leave. And at the same time, I'm thinking, okay, I'm the adult, I have to be able to master my whatever.

And I try to calm down. I do do that. And even he knows you.

And he says, okay, go read, listen to your teacher. But, and so, but, you know.

[Speaker 1] (2:38:42 - 2:38:44)

So how old is your son?

[Speaker 4] (2:38:45 - 2:38:45)

Pardon?

[Speaker 1] (2:38:45 - 2:39:05)

How old is he? Oh, well, I wish I had had parents who were as conscious as you when I was six. And I wish I had heard of the pain body when I was six.

Nobody told me, but so he already knows about all that.

[Speaker 4] (2:39:06 - 2:39:06)

He does.

[Speaker 1] (2:39:07 - 2:39:09)

And he knows it's your pain body.

[Speaker 4] (2:39:09 - 2:39:14)

He does. I tell him. That's wonderful, isn't it?

That was a mommy, that was mommy's pain body.

[Speaker 1] (2:39:14 - 2:39:29)

So it's beautiful. So it's already happening. Why just, if you remove yourself, if that helps, go to another room and sit quietly for a few minutes.

[Speaker 4] (2:39:30 - 2:39:32)

But what does it come back? It's been three years.

[Speaker 1] (2:39:32 - 2:42:56)

It's been there for thousands of years. So a few years is very little for thousands of years to dissolve. So it's inherited.

Every pain body is ultimately collective. It's part of the collective pain body, even if it looks personal. When you look deep enough and you follow it back far enough, you realize it merges with the collective pain body of humanity.

And when you dissolve yours, you not only do it for yourself, you do it for collective also. It's not just a personal thing. So you're doing far more good when you realize.

And so just a little hint. There may be certain typical situations that you already know

that tend to trigger your pain body. And when a typical situation that you already know tends to pull you into that unconscious reaction, you know already what's it, when you, just as this situation, it might be a conversation or whatever it is, just at the beginning of it, you know, okay, here I need to be particularly alert because this is one of those situations that pulls me into unconsciousness.

You don't even need to think it, you know it. And so then you can be, but then you can carry on and with an increased alertness inside yourself as you continue to talk and be involved in that typical situation and bring your increased alertness into it. As you know, I sometimes use the expression, turn up the dimmer switch on the light.

You go. And when you know you're approaching a potential situation that tends to pull you into unconsciousness, then you have to turn up the light on your dimmer switch. You go like, okay.

Now you carry on talking, but you're not identified anymore with mind. You're identified with presence. You are the presence.

And so that's the practice. You can even write down, make a little list of typical pain body triggers for me. One, two, three, four, five.

And then you know them there. And then you go, you see when it's coming, you say, oops, there's one. Okay.

Become alert, present in your entire body. With pain body especially, you need to have attention in the energy field of the body because pain body is a partly physical, a physical energy, partly mental mixture. And so you're in there with your attention and you can feel the aliveness in every cell and then continue to talk and then use it as a practice and to play with it a little.

And if you fail, it's fine. At least you know you failed. The world is full of people who continuously get drawn into it and never even know it because they're so identified with it.

You're doing good work, not only for yourself, but for many others. Everybody does that who works with their pain body.

[Speaker 4] (2:42:57 - 2:43:13)

Can I be selfish, ask a quick question? I do feel that I have created a lot of pain body in him, like such as you mentioned that the first few. So does it stay with him or can I, other than being present, can I help him?

[Speaker 1] (2:43:13 - 2:43:21)

It's possible that your pain body has already infected him a little bit, but your presence

will infect him even more.

[Speaker 4] (2:43:21 - 2:43:21)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (2:43:22 - 2:43:31)

So that counterbalances that a lot too. If you bring in presence, then he may not develop a fully fledged full pain body.

[Speaker 4] (2:43:31 - 2:43:32)

Yeah, I hope so.

[Speaker 11] (2:43:34 - 2:43:37)

Just a little. Thank you so much and thanks for your teaching.

[Speaker 4] (2:43:37 - 2:43:37)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:44:01 - 2:58:51)

From Yogita Sharma, not here. If everything is perfect in totality, then why to blame humanity of being unconscious? It had to be like this, so we should accept it.

Yes. That's what we're doing. Nobody's blaming anybody.

You shouldn't be unconscious. You should know better, but they don't. So you're arguing with what is, so, but you see it.

So, oh, I lost it. The, you don't blame, but you see it. And you also see that it is nobody's fault.

It is nobody's identity to be unconscious. It's not who you truly are and whatever patterns come through you in the unconscious state, it's not who you are. You're manifesting the current evolutionary stage of humanity through you.

As you can also manifest the awakening through this form and many still manifest the unconsciousness. And that's all that you see that there's no blaming in it. The seeing is part of the awakening.

To see it in another is part of the awakening. The moment you blame, it's no longer part of the awakening. When you see unconsciousness and start blaming, you are part of the unconsciousness.

But if you see the unconsciousness for what it is, that's part of the awakening. Even if you see it in another, there's something awakening in the totality. If you see it in yourself, very much more so, there's enormous awakening.

If you see unconsciousness in yourself, either in the moment of it happening, when you're arguing with somebody, identifying with your mental position, become emotional about it and start attacking the other, defending yourself and suddenly realize you're fighting for your life, trying to be right because you have identified yourself with an illusion, a mental conceptual image and a mental position.

Your sense of self is in your mental position. It feels threatened and you're now fighting for your life. You're even beginning to tell lies just to defend your mental position, to save yourself.

And if in that moment you wake up and see what's happening, that's true awakening. And in that moment, the whole structure of that collapses. Or if you wake up after it's just happened, you've just had this dreadful argument with somebody and you feel exhausted.

Even if you were right, you finally came out victorious. Perhaps you had finally, you were threatening him with physical violence and he ran off. So finally you came out victorious and you feel depleted.

And suddenly you wake up and see, this is what I did. That's awakening. But if in that moment you say, that's a dreadful thing, I should never have done that.

It was awful. You didn't, it happened through you. The awakening becomes unconscious again the moment you judge yourself for being unconscious.

That's unconscious again because judging is thoughts arising and you believe in the thoughts and they tell you who you are. You're unconscious again the moment you judge yourself. It could be your whole, I've met people who their whole, they said, the way I brought up my children was so unconscious.

Maybe that's why they turned out the way they did and then they feel terribly guilty. I can see why. But consciousness is now here for the child or the children.

That's their challenge was to have you as a father or mother. That's what life. That's what life gave them.

Life always gives you some form of limitation and ultimately that is a good thing. Life gives you some form of limitation and the limitation you got was your parents, for example. That was the case with me also.

My parents were in continuous conflict and shouting and even physical violence. And

that was my fate to be born into that. And I was never at ease as a child, but that was all part of why eventually awakening happened.

The suffering that started already there later became depression and anxiety and unhappiness. That was all, it was all part of that. And so it's fine.

So if it was your child's destiny to have you as a father or mother, and it was your fate to act out unconscious behavior, which was not your choice, you were conditioned by your parents. They were conditioned by their parents. They were conditioned by their parents who lived in England, Italy, Greece, in a village and acted out the same unconsciousness that your parents or you acted out in New York.

And they traveled with the immigrants across the ocean. They didn't leave themselves behind. They came with the self.

And so to see forgive yourself means to realize this is not who you are and it was not who you are. If you see it now, that is the greatest gift you can give to the world is to see it and be free of it now. And then you do whatever you can to help your children, but not to compensate for something then you would go into some kind of reactive behavior.

Of course you do, wherever you go, you help. And you help, the greatest help you can give is to bring your presence to another human being, whether it's your adult children or whoever it may be, give them the gift of presence, your true presence. Not the presence of you, the person, the presence of you as consciousness.

That is the gift. And then many things become healed in that. Things perhaps that you caused by your unconsciousness, which wasn't yours, it was human unconsciousness.

You caused it, even that to say that you caused it isn't quite correct. It came through you. The unconsciousness manifested through you.

You weren't even there. Now you're there because you are the presence. You are the consciousness.

So it's absurd then to say I did that. No, it's not that. And then you are force for good in this world.

You bring your presence. And if you can't help your children, you can help others. So there's no guilt then also, of course, is a thing where the identification with mind, emotional images is very strong.

Guilt also has to be relinquished, both blaming, which is putting it on others, and blaming yourself and feeling bad about yourself. You need to transcend both blaming others, blaming yourself. Both need to be transcended to be free because as long as you blame, you're trapped in a mind structure, thought structure of who they are or who I am.

I am bad. They are bad. Responsibility, your responsibility, if you want to use that word, is to be responsible for your state of consciousness at this moment.

Your responsibility is to be present now. It's all you can ever be responsible for. Nothing had happened in the past.

There's no, you can't take responsibility for that. You can be responsible for the now, present. Then you're truly responsible in life.

And to some extent, you even undo the past. You heal the past through your presence. There's a related question here, which really is a continuation of what we are saying.

Philip Dickerson writes, how not to judge someone who has done something horrible. The number of people Mao Zedong killed eclipsed the number of people killed by Hitler, Stalin and Pol Pot, put together. Please help me to understand what this really means.

Don't judge. Well, I believe the answer has already been given. Do not equate unconsciousness with who another human being is.

Dreadful things have happened, are happening still on the planet through deep unconsciousness, which always means complete, what is evil? Complete identification with form. There's either the form of me, so that there's complete inability to feel the aliveness in any other form.

When there's complete inability to feel the aliveness in any other life form, we could call that evil. You're cut off. It also applies when the form that you identify with is a group identity.

The greatest evils in this world have not been inflicted by individuals or others, but by people who were identified with their group, their collective, whether it's a tribe, a nation or religion. Or a sect or whatever it may be. If you look at human history, you can see we think that criminals can inflict the greatest evil.

No, normal, respectable, so-called sane citizens who identify with a collective sense of self, which is a thought form that a group of people hold. They all hold it in their head. The thought form of us.

Complete identification with the collective, with form, this group form, that results in an inability to feel the aliveness, the life in any other form or group or individual who don't belong. And then evil happens very easily. You can kill and torture and maim.

You feel nothing, because you're so identified with this rigid form that the others are just concepts. You've made yourself into a concept, us, whatever label is attached to the group or the nation, and then you're doing it for the religion, whatever you call it, for the country, whatever you call it, for the ideology, whatever you call it. So if evil is any

reality, then that's its reality.

Complete identification with form. And as we know, ultimately, identification with form is identification with thought. So your evil then happens.

You've been taken over by thought. And that, in its extreme forms, leads to evil, which really is loss of sensitivity and all empathy, nothing. And the opposite happens when you relinquish that.

Form identification goes, and you realize the essence of who you are is formless. And then you see the same in every other. You don't approach other human beings with concepts and throw them at them.

The moment you meet them, throw a concept at them. That's who you are. So really, there's the unconsciousness at work.

One could almost say there's nobody there, just dreamwalkers, whether they are Hitler or Pol Pot or Mao Tse Tung or millions of others who do dreadful things on a smaller scale. Dreamwalkers. Ha ha.

[Speaker 10] (2:58:53 - 2:58:53)

Ha ha.

[Speaker 11] (2:58:57 - 2:58:57)

Ha ha. Ha ha.

[Speaker 6] (2:59:18 - 2:59:49)

Hi, Jakob. I'm Michelle. And my question has to do with making your ego your friend, which is really what A New Earth allowed me to do.

It allowed me to see my ego not as an enemy, but as a protector, kind of like my big brother on the playground who's protecting me against the bully that just pushed me down in the mud. So I learned to see it as a protector, and then understanding that, learned to make it my friend.

[Speaker 1] (2:59:50 - 3:00:04)

Can you give one example, just so that we have a clear view of what you mean? Can you give one example of when, an occasion when the ego was your protector?

[Speaker 6] (3:00:10 - 3:00:14)

Probably the first thing that comes to mind would be in a family situation.

[Speaker 1] (3:00:14 - 3:00:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 6] (3:00:17 - 3:02:16)

Where my stepfather was visiting and staying with me. And was commenting about something around my house and saying that I should be fixing this or fixing that. And I got very defensive and noticed it right away.

And kind of wanted to come back with, well, this is what I've done with my home and I've done my best and this is where it's at right now. And if you'd like to fix it, you can buck up the money and I'd be happy to accept it. But it made me feel, I think it made me feel weak.

And I noticed that and I remember telling my mom about that. But it did, it made me feel weak. Which really is where I think the ego comes from is a place of feeling threatened and being hurt.

And then of course, here comes the big brother and there's my, the bully is my stepfather in this instance. But what that then allowed me to do was to accept that part of myself, kind of talk it down. And then it allowed me to see that in my stepfather as well.

And then to quote you from the book, you look through the ego to the sanity that is in every human being as his or her essence. So that's what the process of reading A New Earth helped me specifically with my ego. There was many other truths in there.

My question then is, is do you feel that that is a good way, seeing the ego not as an enemy but as a friend and a protector? Is a good way to accept it, to become aware of it, and then to gradually but lovingly dissolve it?

[Speaker 1] (3:02:17 - 4:56:27)

Interesting, thank you, thank you. So when he said those things, let's just stay with that example you gave. It's always easier to answer when one has a concrete example.

And that stands for all kinds of situations. The basic mechanism is always the same when the ego operates. So there was, when he made those comments, things that you could do or should do in your house or were not good enough or haven't done yet, there was something in you that felt either put down or hurt or being told what to do and didn't like it.

So he kind of fought back and said something back, which can easily lead, of course, to a reaction in the other, and then the other will defend himself, herself. So you have two egos fighting it out. Now that in you that felt diminished or hurt or put down was, of

course, the ego.

So in a situation like that, I don't, I would not say that the ego actually is your friend here because it creates a lot of conflict for yourself, even if you don't say anything, even if you just think certain thoughts or have certain emotional reactions, you still have conflict in yourself. You don't want him to say these things, but he's saying these things. So can you be in that situation?

I'll just present an alternative version that might work even better than the ego defending yourself. So if you can be there, not as an entity that feels diminished by what this person says, or if there is an entity, then know that there is an entity, something in you feels diminished because you can know that. Can you go beyond that?

That's the question. Can you go beyond that reaction that is of this person when anybody tells you what to do? Similar example, somebody's driving, you have a co-pilot next to you, and the person says to you that you should be doing something that you're not doing.

You need to slow down, or why don't you do this? You need to, some people, co-pilots, they tell you what to do because they know better. Now, maybe they do.

Either they do know better, or they think they know better. And in my case, when Kim sits next to me, usually she does know better, and as she will confirm, whenever she says something to me, I say, thank you. You should slow do this or do that.

You're in the wrong lane. I say, thank you, and usually she's right. Occasionally, she's not right, but nine times out of 10, she's right, and so I say, thank you, and then, of course, the one time out of 10, she's not right, can't be helped.

I got a ticket. She said, go into this lane, and the policeman came up and stopped me, and I got a ticket, \$100, but that was only one time out of 10. So even now, I still say thank you, even after this, and usually it still works, but if I had an entity driving the car called the ego that says, nobody tells me what to do, or I will feel inferior if she tells me what to do, then this entity that says, nobody tells me what to do, or who do you think you are, or it would say things like, I've been driving for 20, I don't know how many, 30 years without an accident, I could say, which is true, but it's a miracle. And usually, I say, thank you, and it works very well. She's usually right, and even if I knew that she's usually wrong, which is not the case, if you might have a co-driver who just drives so differently that she always tells you what to do, what he or she would do, but you wouldn't do it, you can still say, thanks for your advice, but I'd rather stay in this line.

Now, back to your situation. He comes to your home and says, you should be doing this and that. If you're there simply as a presence rather than as a little entity that needs to defend itself, you listen to what he says and say, oh, well, that's what I would say.

Oh, this is what you, you should do that. Oh, okay, thanks, I'll consider that. Oh, and then you should, this is wrong, is it?

You said, well, I'll look into, see, I'll think about that. Thanks for your opinion. I've completely changed it.

There's no longer him trying to control me. There's only him giving your opinion. And even if there is a bully hiding inside him, you're not seeing the bully, you're simply saying, oh, you don't need to defend yourself because the ego believes that's the strength in you, but that's a weakness.

You're much stronger if you find that place within where you don't need the defense. And so if you deal with that situation there, then you are free of ego and you deal with it much more powerfully and you're free because you don't have to do what he says. He doesn't live there.

So that's fine, but you can give him his due. Perhaps he likes a little bit of acknowledgement. Perhaps he likes you to think that he knows a lot.

Egos love these things. So you tell him, thanks for your advice, I will consider it. And then if he comes back a few weeks later and says you still haven't done it and say, well, I thought about it, but I decided not for this reason or that reason.

It didn't seem quite right, but thanks for your advice anyway. I did think about it. You can give him what he wants without giving anything away from who you are.

And there's no conflict in the situation, neither inside you nor outside. So usually the ego thinks it's helping you, but it's really not really helping. It's making the situation more complicated.

The strength of the ego is your weakness. And if the ego does not operate, it says you need me, you need me for protection. No, you don't.

You're much more powerful without that pattern of behavior. So it's a question of trying it out so that when you meet big egos, egos come into your life, it's inevitable in this world that from time to time or quite often, you will come into contact with big egos, walking egos. And so they may have all kinds of designs.

They want to tell you what to do. They want to control you. They want to do this.

And if you react to the ego, that's your ego. If you fight their ego, that's your ego. If you stand back, observe the behavior, and then say, be the presence, out of presence, you simply say what is right.

And that's much better. And sometimes you may even get good advice, which perhaps the ego wouldn't accept because it comes from somebody else. So it could well be that

somebody does say something, but you are not hearing it because your ego says, nobody's telling me what to do.

Or your co-driver tells you something that is very helpful that, and you think, nobody's telling me how to drive. And a minute later, you have an accident. If you had listened, it wouldn't have happened.

That's possible too. So you have to be open to the possibility that sometimes your ego misinterprets somebody else's intention because the ego sees ego everywhere. So even an innocent comment made by somebody, if you have a strong ego, you may misinterpret it as if it were ego-motivated and will say something to defend you.

So the ego is always defending itself, but ultimately the ego is defending an illusion because the ego is an illusory entity, a mind-made sense of self. So the ego is true, it's very good at defending, but what it is defending is an illusion. And the strength in you is not the ego, it's the weakness in you.

It's reversed from one's usual way of looking at it or perspective. So you can try all kinds of situations so that gradually you become non-reactive because all reaction is of the ego. The ego reacts the same.

Certain energy comes towards you, the ego reacts against it. The Tao teaches and any spiritual teaching is not to oppose anything. So coming back to your situation, this person says, you should be doing this, you should do that, you should do that.

You don't oppose it. You say, oh, isn't that interesting? Or the co-driver says, you should be in the other lane, you should go more slowly, you can go faster.

Oh, thank you. May even be right. So you never go that, you go, oh.

So that's the martial arts. Don't oppose the other's attack by going, oh, oh. That's a Western way, it's kind of, oh.

And the Eastern ways, you step back in the same direction as the attack is coming. And then he falls. Or something else happens, we don't know.

But you go with it and then transform it. There's no opposition. So that's a very wonderful spiritual practice and it's absolutely necessary for everybody to bring in a different energy into human interactions.

And if you have the impulse to defend yourself, you can notice it in yourself and you can see, oh, there's the ego, an egoic impulse, an old reaction. The moment you've recognized the ego, you're also free to choose something else because you're not, there's, it's, strictly speaking, it's not even the ego anymore. Strictly speaking, ego only exists when you don't know it exists.

That's really the ego. When you know there is a certain behavior pattern happening in you which could be called the ego, it's not really the ego anymore because for the ego to operate in you needs your complete identification with it, your complete unconsciousness. So that's a very wonderful spiritual practice and it's absolutely necessary for everybody to bring in a different energy into human interactions.

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That's really the ego. When you know there is a certain behavior pattern happening in you which could be called the ego, it's not really the ego anymore because for the ego to operate in you needs your complete identification with it, your complete unconsciousness. So you cannot, to take it a little bit further, even we could say then, you can never see the ego in you because the moment you see it for what it is, it's not the ego anymore, it's only a behavior pattern.

So people who are most trapped in ego, most strongly identified with ego, they have no idea about ego. They don't know it. They are it.

The moment you see the ego, it's not the ego anymore, strictly speaking, and then you are free to choose something different. Many things that the ego feels hurtful about don't actually hurt you, they hurt the ego. Let's take another example, driving.

Occasionally it may happen, well it happens to me sometimes, you get insulted by other drivers for some reason, I don't know why. They may be shouting something at you. In some countries, you experience it more than in others.

In colder countries, they are more reserved. In hot countries, they shout more, they're more open, so they, and the windows are open, so they will shout something at you. And so the ego will feel, something in you feels hurt.

If somebody shouts, you idiot, something in you feels diminished. And there's an automatic reaction that comes in for most people, which is ego defense mechanism, or I sometimes call it the instant repair mechanism. And the instant repair mechanism calls you, needs you to shout something back.

And it needs to be a little bit stronger than the original insult. By doing that, the ego has repaired its, the injury caused to its self-image. The ego is an imaginary sense of self.

And so it happens so quickly that most people don't know that this is the mechanism behind it. They just shout something back because they have the strong need to do so. Why do they have the strong need to shout something back?

It makes no difference whether you shout something and this person hears it, makes no difference, and then he drives off. What's the point? Well, there is a big point because you feel a little bit better after that, or as the ego, at least you've done something to repair yourself.

But it's a self-repair thing, the ego does that. And once you know that, next time it happens, you can observe the impulse and then say, not do it, not by repressing it, that's never good. If you have to repress it, better to shout it.

Otherwise it might turn into a stomach pain or something. But if you observe the impulse and then you can try out something different, and that is non-reaction. So the driver shouts something and then you look at him.

That's a very disconcerting thing for the other person. And then he might shout again because he thinks you're deaf. And still nothing, it's very strange.

And the traffic may be moving, so you may not be able to see what further effect it has on him. But the interesting thing is that you feel, at first something in you feels diminished. I write about this a little bit in *The New Earth*.

As a practice, I say, don't do it always, occasionally. Do not repair your diminished sense of self when something happens, a certain situation happens. Accept the diminishment, it's an ancient spiritual practice, by the way.

And that's, for example, what Jesus was talking about with turning the other cheek. Because being slapped on the face is not so much a physical thing, it's a psychological diminishment. And so when he said, turn the other cheek, he was pointing to something.

And that is when one's, another thing would be not to reply when somebody is spreading false rumors about you. In some situations, you may have to state the truth. But in many others, it would be, it's pointless to say anything, but the ego would do it automatically.

But you don't have to do it, you can just let it be. So not to automatically and unconsciously repair that diminished sense of self, which is there even if somebody calls you idiot, you end up with a slightly diminished sense of self. And so not to do anything is an amazing thing.

At first it feels very strange, and you feel, and then you feel there's a power underneath that was never touched by that. And that you've suddenly, you feel that deeper power that was not touched by whatever anybody said. And that's an amazing thing to find the power that is deeper than ego.

And sometimes you have to have yourself, one of the ways in which you can find it is through a temporary diminishment of your sense of self in some situation. So that's quite amazing. It's something to experiment with.

Some people feel diminished in their sense of self, people with a fairly strong ego, if they ever have to say, I don't know. Some people just, whatever you ask them, they will never say, I don't know. They'll always have either some answer or even if they have to invent it or some kind of other thing they say, but it's not, I don't know.

Because the ego feels, some egos feel diminished when they say, I don't know. And those people, I would recommend them to practice and say, I don't know. And see what that feels like and whether they feel diminished and what's underneath that.

My brother was like that, my half brother, who is 20 years younger than me, when he was 16, 17, I noticed his ego was growing and he would never say, I don't know, no matter what question you asked him, even if he had no idea what the answer was, he would invent some fantastic thing and explanation. And I think once I said to him, why don't you try saying, don't know and see what happens, what it feels like. And then he did and he was still alive.

Perhaps more alive. It's a strange thing. The ego is a very strange entity.

So practice all kinds of human situations, every day, I'm sure you'll be able to practice one way or another. Thank you. Welcome to our private seminar.

I'm talking about spiritual awakening in daily life. And some people may not be quite sure what the term spiritual awakening even means. Or they may have strange ideas in their head of what spiritual is, what is spiritual and what is awakening.

And instead of defining right now, I'm just going to talk about spiritual awakening in daily life. And as I talk, what spiritual means and what awakening means will hopefully emerge while we talk. So instead of defining beforehand what these things are, because although we're not, this is not a talk on philosophy.

So we're not here to define terms. It's an experiential thing. It's not information based.

We're here to experience something and then to bring that into daily life, live it in our daily existence. Everybody has done some traveling and sightseeing, visited unfamiliar places, European cathedrals perhaps, or the pyramids in Egypt or Machu Picchu, Stonehenge in England, whatever it may be. And it's often an interesting experience for me to go into a place and walk around doing some sightseeing.

Let's say it's a cathedral, an ancient cathedral in Europe, and you walk in there and usually you have little groups of people with a guide. And they walk around. The guide has now come this way in different languages.

The guide explains what this means, when it was built or who is, this is a tomb or this king or whoever lies there and all kinds of interesting information. And just occasionally when I walk into a place like that, an ancient cathedral, I kind of approach the little group

and just listen in and stand at the side and just see what he's saying, sometimes quite interesting. But I never feel drawn to actually sticking around for very long because I prefer to explore the place by myself without the interference of a voice explaining to me what things are.

Now, it may well be that I may have read a guidebook beforehand, or I may not. In most cases, probably I have not looked at a guidebook beforehand. So I'm actually going into this, let's say it's a medieval cathedral.

I'm walking into this medieval cathedral, not knowing very much about it, except it was built 1,000 years ago, whatever, and it took two or 300 years to build. But I prefer that experience of entering a space and not being burdened by information about it rather than entering a space and immediately being bombarded with facts about it. There are two very different kinds of experiencing that place.

One kind of experiencing that place is based on bits and pieces of information, on knowledge, on mental knowledge, on mind. And this is how most people travel for that reason because they want to learn new things. So as soon as they enter the cathedral, they say, okay, I'm going to join this guided tour.

Or these days, I have invented something to substitute the human guide. You can rent a little device recording with earphones and you can choose your language and you put it on your ears and then you choose your language and then it tells you where to go. Now turn right here, stop here, and then it starts explaining it.

You look. And you're continuously learning a lot. And then, okay, walk on now 10 steps and now look up to the left and you will see more information, information coming in, very interesting.

I'm learning so much about history. It's true, you are. You're learning a lot.

And so you walk around this cathedral with the voice in your head teaching you about it. What's wrong with that? Nothing.

It's fine. Why don't I do that? Because there is another way of experiencing, of perceiving that place.

And that's not something that people even know about. Some people do it intuitively. And that way is going into that place and not perceive whatever is around you through the veil of facts, information, knowledge, thoughts.

Ultimately, it all comes down to thoughts. One thought after another. There is another way of perceiving that place that is not based on mind activity.

And I love that other way more than the way of learning about. There's nothing wrong

with that. Sometimes I read a guidebook afterwards after I've been to a place like that.

I read, oh, that's what I saw and have a little bit of information about it. But at first, I love entering that place and perceiving, first of all, the totality of this, the vast, let's say it's a cathedral, it could be other places, but there's always, there's a spaciousness there. There's a vastness.

There's a silence interrupted, of course, sometimes by the voice of the guides here and there and the clicking of cameras, but there is still a vastness, a silence. The whole place has a presence. There's an energy field there.

And the first thing that I love to take in is to enter and to take in the totality of that energy field that is this ancient cathedral, to sense it, to feel it directly. And it has its own presence. It's an energy field.

I like to get in touch with this ancient energy field, ancient and new because it's still alive. And then look around at this architecture and so on. And again, just see the shapes, the forms, the colors.

So you see, be aware also of the space itself because anybody who goes into a place like that and is struck by something, they go, wow. Even people who later seek out the guide, there may be a few seconds when they take in this and go, they sense something, a sacred presence, you could almost say. They sense it.

They don't need to know anything about it. In fact, you cannot sense the presence of that place if your mind is full of thoughts, full of knowledge. And if you enter a cathedral and you are, let's say you are already very knowledgeable, you're a historian or whatever, and you know much, you would have to let go for a moment of all that you know if you truly wanted to experience that place.

So I always a little bit feel sorry for most tourists because they don't seem to be aware that there is another way of experiencing life. There is another way of perceiving other than the mind, through the mind only. There's nothing wrong with the mind.

It has its place and it's needed for quite a few things in your daily life. But for many other things, for realizing the depths of life and becoming a deep person, that's a strange expression that's sometimes used. You say this person has a depth or we speak of a depth of perception.

What does that mean for a person? You would say there's a shallow person and there's a deep person. What does that mean?

I would say it means what we might call a shallow person, a person who is totally trapped only in the mind activity, the knowledge accumulated by the mind and perceives everything through thoughts. In other words, you walk around your life like the tourist

who rents this little device and tells him comments about what they are perceiving continuously. That's fine.

Sometimes it may be necessary, but imagine going through life, not being able to get rid of that device. You can't take it off anymore. It keeps commenting.

So wherever you go in the street, it says, okay, look at that person there. And you have, and the thing even tells you whether you like it or not. I like that.

Oh, I don't like that. I wish I had an answer on whatever. And of course, this is how most people live because they have, they're so identified with the involuntary mind activity, the little voice in the head, they don't even know it.

They think they are the voice. And to live through the voice then makes your life quite shallow because whatever you experience lacks depth. You experience it through a concept.

Every thought is conceptual. So when, let's say you are in the street, a man or woman comes towards you and your mind immediately has to say something about whether you like or don't like or would like to do something with this person, whatever it may be, or have some kind of reference point or commenting on the way they look, weird or strange or nice, or I'd love to, whatever. Is there another way of perceiving this human being?

Yes, to perceive the human being in the same way, if that's what I said about the cathedral, if that resonates with you, if you have had a glimpse of that experience or perhaps more than a glimpse, then you know the difference between stepping into a place and going, no comment. Well, perhaps the mind says, oh, this is so beautiful. And then there's this stillness again.

So there is a still space through which you perceive instead of concepts through which you perceive. And suddenly there's a depth, not only you feel another dimension is suddenly present, not only outside of you, another dimension that the tourist who is totally dependent on either the mechanical guide or the human guide is not aware of that, that the tourist who only listens to the commentary misses the true aliveness, the sacredness and the depths of that place. And so also within, you are trapped in the head.

There's no depth then to you as a human being where there's something that responds to life, something deeper than the commentary in your head. And so many people these days are trapped then with this guide, the tourist guide they can't get rid of and it's called your mind. And so not that the mind is not a useful tool and even in the cathedral, it's sometimes, it adds a little bit to it if you know something about it.

And I would say that's the second stage to come back just for a moment to this cathedral analogy, one could almost say, you come back to that. Of course, ideally and what I do that occasionally, but sometimes we don't have enough time because when we travel,

first I love to experience the place without knowing anything and truly experience it, the depths of it. And then perhaps go back to the hotel room and then look at a guidebook and then learn a few facts about it, could be quite helpful.

And then go back the next day, look at it again and then you have a balance between knowing things about it and still being able to experience it. So in other words, you have then some information in your head is, oh, this is, I read about that. It was built by such and such thing and then whatever.

And then again, you have the spaciousness where you perceive. And then you look at something else and you are, this is the statue of the saint so-and-so and some knowledge about it that you have had, might have overlooked a little detail. You can actually see a tear coming out of his eye or whatever.

Oh yeah, there's a tear, he seems to be crying. I don't know why, but it seems to be. And then again, you can take it in without the commentary.

So that's a little, you can experiment with that. And so I'm using that almost as just an analogy for the whole of your life. Most people are stuck with the tourist guide.

In the head, it comments continuously of what's going on in your life and evaluates and interprets and defines in words everything that you perceive. And so in whatever way it is defined or interpreted, depends on your particular conditioning, on the way you were brought up, what you were taught by the surrounding culture and so on. So the kind of tourist guide you have depends on your past.

And so it's really your past talking to you continuously, certain forms of conditioning from your culture, your education, your family background, what you have read. Your fears and ambitions are also expressed there as thought structures. They become thoughts, what you would like, want, what you fear, what if that happens?

Oh my God, this could go wrong. What if, of course, so it becomes very problematic because the voice doesn't stop talking. Except occasional moments when you suddenly feel a heightened sense of aliveness, perhaps you're out in nature and you're looking at a tree or a forest and for a moment you say, oh.

And then after a few seconds, the mind says, that's beautiful. But for about 10 seconds or 20 seconds, the mind wasn't saying anything. And that's the reason that you can know that it's beautiful.

Beautiful is not, the mind cannot really, the mind is concepts. There's no beauty really in that. If something from within you responds to beauty in nature, for a moment, there must have been a space of where the tourist guide in the head stopped talking.

And in that space, there is a deeper experiencing of whatever is there. There's a depth to

your experience. What does that mean?

It means, yes, what you see is the same, but the state of consciousness through which you see it has deepened. A space has opened up inside you through which the perception happens. And that's the depths.

So you could say, when you look at something and for a moment you're not interpreting what you see, there's just the seeing. And you may be aware of the background to what you see, which cannot be defined, but there's a stillness inside while you perceive. This is what I meant when I talked about entering a cathedral without the knowledge in your head.

So suddenly the mind has become still and the perception happens. So you have two dimensions. You have a stillness in the background and whatever is going on outside is there.

The stillness is the depth that changes your perceptions. Then you see that the tree also has a depth to it and an aliveness and a sacredness that you didn't know before when you were conceptualizing the tree and said, oh, that's such and such a tree and whatever knowledge you have, or this tree is in my grandmother's garden too, or this, I'd like to chop this tree up and use it as my Christmas tree, or I wonder how much it would be worth the timber if I cut it, how much the timber would be worth.

You're not really, the tree is a surface phenomenon when you're in that state of consciousness, a utilitarian surface phenomenon. You cannot sense the depths, the aliveness, the sacredness of the tree, and I'm only using tree as one of many possible examples. Life really, the tree stands for life.

It could be a human being. You cannot sense the aliveness of that if you are totally trapped in conceptualization in your head. So there needs to be a depth to you in order to recognize that there is also a depth in life.

Otherwise you walk around for the rest of your life skimming the surface of life. Just every human being is a surface phenomenon because you just have judgments about them and whatever you see, it's just no depths. And then you can go into nature, and even there you will not know that nature has a sacredness to it because you can't sense it because you haven't, the space isn't there inside you to sense that when you go into a forest, an ancient forest, you've been there for thousands of years, and you cannot sense that that is a sacred space because otherwise you would go, wow.

And then you would, and if you don't know it's sacred and our civilization doesn't know, it looks at the forest as a utilitarian thing. How much would it be worth? So the people who cut down the ancient forests, they don't know what they are doing because they cannot sense that there's more there than what appears to be there on the surface of things.

But since they themselves are trapped in the surface of their own mind only, they have no idea what they are doing when they log an ancient forest. To them, it's just, it's a utilitarian thing. They talk to them and say, what are you talking about?

We are going to plant trees again. Yeah, but it'll take a thousand years to reach that. That sacredness, that no idea what you say, sacredness, what do you mean?

It's a tree. We are harvesting the trees. And so, and this is one example of what happens when you cannot get out of the conceptualizing mind.

Life has no depth anymore. And getting out of the conceptualizing mind is what I call spiritual awakening. So spiritual awakening has nothing to do with some kind of, suddenly, you have a new spiritual thoughts in your head and you start talking about angels or even God.

You suddenly start talking about God all the time and then people say, oh, he's become spiritual. No, he hasn't, he's become religious. Religious without spiritual is an ideology.

You could be a communist and then talk in those terms, whatever, it's an ideology. Sometimes religious and spiritual can go together, but in many cases, religious only is just more thoughts in your head, but different kinds of thoughts. Then God, of course, becomes my God.

It's your God is not the right one. And then you become my enemy and I will conceptualize you as the non-believer, for example, and the non-believers are evil, another concept and the non-believers must be killed because we know the truth and the truth is our God. Concepts, concepts in the mind.

You can no longer sense, and then when you do kill somebody, you're not killing a human being because you cannot sense that there is a being there, another human being you are killing. There's a mental concept there. You have conceptualized, you have deadened, just as you've deadened the forest to yourself, you've deadened the other human being and made them into, you put some label on, non-believer, American.

And so it's not a human being, it's American. This is, and that's how it, this is how the madness grows. So, and of course they don't know what's happened to them.

They don't realize what's happening. They are unconscious and not unconscious in the conventional sense of the word because unconscious in the conventional sense of the word means they're lying there. No, not that unconscious.

They seem to be very conscious, seem to be very alert with their guns or whatever they're doing, but they are unconscious because they are totally trapped in the conceptualizing mind. They no longer sense the aliveness of life. They have deadened themselves.

They don't know who they are beyond the conceptualizing mind where they're completely identified with their belief structures that gives them, the belief structures give them their identity, their sense of who they are. I am a, whatever label they have, we are, the we, we are, the only true, et cetera, et cetera. And then it's the others, it's the others, them, they're not alive.

They're just, they're concepts. So it's easy to, when you no longer sense what you're doing, to kill another human becomes easy because you no longer know that the human, the depths of the human being has disappeared. And that's perhaps why Jesus on the cross said, they know not forgive them for they know not what they do.

They have, in other words, they are unconscious. They have not awakened. And so we are coming here from the tourists going into a cathedral, we've, and we've arrived at terrorists, just an extension of really what is considered a normal state of consciousness and what it does to you to be trapped in that your whole life is a dreadful fate.

And the reason why we are on this planet, why we have arrived at such a point of extreme crisis is that this state of consciousness that we have been trapped in for thousands of years is, has created and is creating increasing havoc and destruction. It destroys nature. It destroys human beings, destroying each other.

What we do externally is always a reflection of the predominant collective state of consciousness. And if you read the 20th century history, you see what human beings have done to each other. The only conclusion you can reach is they are mad.

It's quite mad. And 20th century is just the most extreme form of that madness where human beings kill each other by the millions. Often they don't even know what for.

In the end, you don't even know anymore what the whole thing is for. The First World War, what was that whole thing about? And then the First World War led to the Second World War and so on and innumerable other wars.

So we need the spiritual awakening then is for the planet or humanity to survive is an absolute necessity. So having realized then that what is needed is to awaken out of complete identification with the continuous stream of thinking in your mind. Okay, well, how do we do that?

Simple first step. The first step is to realize that there is a continuous stream of thoughts in your mind. This is the first step of awakening.

It's not saying I shouldn't be thinking. No, the first step is to realize that there is a voice that talks most of the time inside you. And perhaps that until now, you had been so identified with the voice that was you.

You were talking to yourself. Sometimes people talk to themselves as I. Sometimes

people talk to themselves as you.

You have a little voice that says you should have done that. Why didn't you do that? You're talking to, the voice is talking to some other voice and then perhaps there's an answer.

Well, I couldn't help it. Yeah, but you should have. So sometimes the voice splits itself into different voices.

Talking to each other becomes even more mad. And sometimes the voice also can have certain streams that one stream of the voice only comes up in certain circumstances. What some psychologists, they have discovered that this is the case.

Some psychologists call it sub-personalities. So in certain circumstances, perhaps a whining little girl suddenly comes up. But you're 30 years old, why are you still?

It's a sub-personality. And suddenly you have a whining voice in your head that complains about how unfair life is treating me. It's a sub-personality talking.

And then when that subsides, something else happens and another voice suddenly comes in and becomes extremely aggressive. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Another stream, another aspect of that has arisen.

And so sometimes different voices take over, but really it all belongs ultimately to the one thing, the one voice in your head. So the first step to awakening, the beginning of awakening is to realize there's a voice in my head. And it's especially useful to realize in the moment of it saying, for example, voices have all, most of the mind activities, old thoughts, old patterns, repetitive thoughts.

For example, I had, when I was younger, I had a frequent thought that said, whenever something that wasn't good happened to me or that my mind interpreted as not good, the voice in my head would say, oh, you see, bad things always happen to you. And then I was just waiting for the next bad thing to confirm that I was right. And it would never have to wait for very long and something else would go wrong in my life.

And I would say, you see, it's happening again. Always bad things to you. I don't know why it's always to you.

And then of course you experience the emotion that goes with that kind of thought. And I completely believed in that thought. I was so identified with that thought, I didn't realize this is just a thought in my head.

It's not the reality. It's a conditioned way of interpreting the phenomenal world, the world outside you. And so the liberation then comes with beginning to realize the voice is saying the same thing again and again and again.

And it's not me, it's the voice. Who realizes that? You.

So there is a deeper dimension is suddenly there when you become aware that all the stuff that your mind is saying to you and to others when you have trouble, is not ultimately who you are. But the awareness that at this moment, your mind is reproducing the same old thoughts, there you're beginning to touch the depths that is within yourself that we could call the awareness, the aware presence. Because knowing that there is thought in my head is not a thought.

It's just a looking, an internal aware. Why do bad things always happen to me? And then you look at the thought and you realize a thought.

So you begin to, one could almost say, you listen to your thoughts, you become aware of the kinds of thoughts you think. And this is for many people, the first awakening. And what people realize when they first awaken, not everybody, because some people's thoughts are not too bad.

They can live with it quite well. They saw their thought activity is not predominantly negative. But many people actually find that when they become aware of their thoughts, they realize how many thoughts are actually negative.

The majority of people become aware that the larger part of your mind activity is negative thoughts. There are far more negative thoughts than positive thoughts. Not in everybody.

Some people have quite a few positive thoughts. One could almost say it's easier for people who are trapped in a lot of negative thinking to step out of their thinking than people who have relatively nice thoughts, their inner urge to awaken is not as strong. If you live in a self-made nightmare, as I did, the impulse to awaken is much stronger than you'd really, I can't stand my mind anymore.

I don't want to live with this mind anymore. Oh, that's good. It doesn't mean you have to kill yourself.

It just means you have to realize that your mind is not who you are. You are the awareness behind your mind. You are the space because the awareness is space.

It's not a thought, it's consciousness. So there's a depth of consciousness to you of which the thought activity is only like little ripples. You could say there's a vast ocean or lake, very deep, with lots of waves and ripples on the surface.

And the waves and ripples on the surface are the thoughts in your head. And so most people are trapped on that level. They don't realize that there is a depth underneath that that is vast.

And that if they ever wanted to become creative human beings or bring anything new into this world, it would have to come from the depth. It can't come from just the surface activity of your mind. That's repetitive, continuously, same kind of thing.

Nothing creative can ever happen on that level alone. One day I'm going to compose a great piece of music. One day I'm going to write a great book.

Just have to wait. Well, not if you don't get out of that. Of course, the mind is needed to write a book, yes.

But you cannot have a deep or inspired thought if you don't make room, a moment for the depths inside you so that you touch something deeper. You need to become still for a moment when you sit in front of your computer or piece or notepad and want to write something new and creative, bring something new into this world. Well, where does that come from?

From the repetitive noise in your head? No, it comes if for a moment the repetitive noise in your head subsides. That's the moment of stepping into the cathedral.

Ah. And then you wait. So there's a, open yourself to the stillness inside.

It's there. You don't have to make yourself still. Underneath, even in the most mad, the maddest person, underneath that, there is the realm of stillness.

They just can't touch it. It's there. So it's very easy to actually embrace, say, okay, you don't need to think all the time.

You need to have spaces of no thought, and it's not that difficult unless you're totally mad. But not that many people are totally mad. Most people are partially mad.

And the madness comes up occasionally in a more acute form. It's there. So can you walk into the cathedral and be there as an aware presence rather than a mind burdened with knowledge?

Can you walk along the street and look at another human being without commenting? Just look. And sense.

When there's no commenting, you can sense there's an aliveness in the other human being. There's an essence there that is deeper than, even deeper than your mind and deeper than their mind. And if you then communicate with that human being, while you, for example, while you listen to them, can you be still inside while you listen?

You might be talking about the weather. It doesn't matter. But be still and just be there as the space for that human being.

As you are there, you are there at the space as the space for the tree and realize what

an incredible phenomenon this tree is. Beyond anything that you could know about it through the mind. What you know may be useful for certain things, but there's a depth to that thing that we call tree that you cannot capture through that, but you can sense something.

And the more you sense it outside, the deeper you go within. And there is an even greater depth in another human being. And the more you sense the depths of aliveness in another human being, the more you sense it in yourself.

It always goes together. So relationships become problematic if both parties are totally trapped in their noise-making mind, then very quickly conflict arises in relationships. And that's why relationships are full of conflict because people can't get out of that.

They have, they are trapped in here. So every discussion when they disagree becomes conflict. You have an opinion.

This is how it is. I'm right. You identify with your mental position.

Your partner has a different mental position. No, you're not, I'm right. You identify with your opinion.

Identify means your sense of self is in the thought that you have, in your mental position of this is how it is. Today, it's cold. Your partner says, no, it's not cold.

It's just mild. No, it's cold. I'm just giving us an oversimplified example.

Is this, even that could lead to an argument because you, are you accusing me of being a liar? All moving in concepts. Well, you did lie last week.

I wasn't lying. I was just. And it goes on and on and on.

So you're, and it's all happened. It's all the entire relationship is mind, mind against mind. So you identify with mind and that becomes the ego, the me that needs to be right.

Always, if the ego is wrong, it's death. Thinks I'm dead. I'll die.

Can't be wrong. I need to defend my position. Dreadful fate, but it's normal.

So we are now slowly getting to what spiritual awakening is because we have looked at what spiritual sleep is. We've seen what it means to be asleep or unconscious, normal, in other words, normal existence, the entire world, not the entire world. There's some awakening here and there.

More and more people, in fact, are awakening, going through the awakening process. We now know what that is because it means you're no longer identified with the mind. Who

are you if you're not your mind?

You are the consciousness out of which every thought comes. And then it pops back. It's like a wave or ripple.

You are the consciousness that is far greater than any single thought or even greater than the totality of thought. And that consciousness is experienced when you first touch it as inner stillness. Stillness doesn't mean you go to sleep.

It means the mind is where the mind was before. There's a space. And out of that space comes all creativity, every great realization or insight that any human being has ever had.

The creative impulse comes out of the vast intelligence that is there. And then the mind, it flows into the mind and the mind becomes an instrument for that. And that's how the mind can be a beautiful thing when it's not just self-serving, but it is serving something greater than itself.

The mind as a master is mad. The mind as a servant is a great thing. So that's the shift in consciousness that is happening and needs to happen on this planet.

The mind finds its place as the servant of consciousness or awareness. So it's up to you then to invite the consciousness that you are beyond the mind into your daily life. And how do you do that?

You do that by inviting space, inner space or inner stillness into your life. For example, while you make a cup of tea or coffee, why not try to practice being still with every movement, just be aware, bring awareness into that, every movement. Pour the water, no commentary.

Look at a flower, look at a tree, look at the sky and for just a few seconds, just look. Listen to the wind, listen to the rain, listen to whatever sound you can hear and just listen. Bring the attention to sense perceptions, attention to sense perceptions.

That means the mind is quiet while you listen. The mind is quiet while you look. And that's a little practice that you can do many times during the day and it will deepen your life.

It will bring spaces into an otherwise, an existence that goes from one thing that you have to do to another thing you have to do and another thing you have to think about now. There's then there's no gaps. So the gaps are vital in daily life, inviting gaps into your daily existence, looking for the gaps in daily existence.

In everyday situations, a helpful thing, as many of you already know, is to feel that your body is actually alive inside. Normally people are not aware of that because their whole

attention is on thought activity. But if you can feel that your body is alive, so the attention is, some attention can be in the energy field of your hands and you feel, yes, they feel alive.

There is an aliveness that pervades the entire body. Your body is full of life, but most people can't feel that. So if you can feel the inner body that you are alive inside, that the entire body at this very moment is a vibrating, alive energy field.

And it actually feels good to have some of your attention there, even while you're looking around the room. You can just, for people, people who are new to this can just start by doing it with their hands, feel the aliveness that's in your hands. You can feel it perhaps even more with your eyes closed.

And then you can still feel it even when your eyes are open. Simultaneous thing, you're present inside your body and you're present outside in your sense perceptions. What does that do?

It means your mind becomes quite still because you can't be thinking also at the same time because you're already present in the body and you're present outside. You become awake, really awake to this moment then. And your mind, there's not enough attention left then for thinking.

Part of your attention is in the inner body and part of your attention is on your perceptions. And what you perceive then is more alive than it was before. It's more surprising.

It's more, it has more depth to it. Every human being is more interesting then, more really there. New, things, you no longer feel that you're perceiving.

Experiencing the same old thing again and again. Life then is always new. Every day is a new day.

It's not a repetition. As people grow older, they reach 30 years, 40 years, 50 years. And for many people, life becomes more and more boring because it's so repetitive.

And they no longer look anywhere. They go every day, they go to work, the same place. They don't look at anything anymore.

There's nothing to look at. I looked at it yesterday and last year and five years ago. What's there to look at?

And even people they live with for a few years, after a few years, you don't look at your wife or husband anymore. They are part of the furniture. And you don't look at your paintings anymore on the wall because they've been there for too long.

You can't look, it's their old. And really, nothing new. And then you become that kind of

person who said, I've seen it all.

Don't tell me about it. I know it all. I've had, yeah, I know.

I know that kind of person. I know that kind of thing. I've been there, done it.

Been there, done it. Life becomes more and more dull. Been there, done it.

You're not there and you're not. And so that's the fate of many people as they grow old in our civilization. And only a few, perhaps an increasing number now because more and more people are awakening spiritually, they remain alive, perhaps even become more alive as they grow older.

And then you have a truly, and then the person doesn't actually, even if they are 70, 80 years old, you don't get the impression that they are old people because there is a light shining through their eyes. There is an aliveness to them. And occasionally you meet people like that.

They may be old in terms of calendar years, but they are not old inside because they are not burdened by their mind anymore. Their mind can be used, but they are no longer being used by their mind, which says, I already know all this. And so every day is new and fresh and every moment is still alive because you're not putting your past, you're not obscuring it with past, the accumulated past in your head, putting it onto the aliveness of the present moment, stifling the aliveness of the present moment.

And so then spiritual awakening is then essentially intrinsically connected with the aliveness of the present moment, the only place where life is. And so you are more and more open to the now rather than live continuously in past and future, which is normal. For most people, it's future until they reach a certain age where there's not much future left.

And then they live mostly in the past. That's why many old people continuously talk about the past and the younger people continuously think about their future where they're going to finally make it someday and find fulfillment in some future when they have done or achieved this, whatever it may be. It could be a big house or recognition or for spiritually inclined people, it could be enlightenment, but it's put into the future.

I'm going to reach that place and then I'll be finally fully myself, fulfilled, happy, alive. I will become alive one day, fully alive. But without \$10 million in the bank, I don't think I can feel alive.

Because I really need to have that sense of security. I need the sense of security without which I would just be in fear the way I've always been. And you'll be surprised if the \$10 million happen to come to you for a few weeks, you will feel alive.

And one night you'll wake up and you'll be in the same fear as before because the stock market is about to collapse. So spiritual awakening is becoming awake to the aliveness of this moment. And becoming awake to the aliveness of this moment, the all that ever is, nothing else is ever going to come.

You can wait for millions of years if you lived that long. Nothing is ever going to come that's not this moment. Your life will always be this moment.

And that's a, it sounds, well, we know that. No, you don't. If you don't live it, you don't know it.

Life is always this moment. You don't know this if you don't live it. It's only through living it that you know it.

Otherwise it's just a concept in your head. Yeah, of course life is always this moment. And then what's next?

Where's the next moment? So you might as well then become friendly with this moment if there's nothing else. Be open to that.

Don't stifle it with an excessive amount of judgments and interpretations and definitions, but be open to the aliveness of this moment. Open means there's spaciousness here. So the shift is from a thought-based entity, which is the normal old way for humans, been for thousands of years, to a deeper entity that is based in awareness of presence, consciousness.

So because when you're not commenting on things compulsively, compulsively, who are you? When you're not continuously thinking about me and my problems, at this very moment, let's say, pretend that you don't remember your past at this moment. In fact, you don't because at this moment, unless you start a thought process, at this moment, your past is not here.

You're just sitting here now. But pretend for a moment, actually, there is no past and there's no future. What's left of you?

If I removed your past and your future from you now, what's left? I remember nothing. What's left?

I don't remember my name. Who are you? I don't know.

But there must be something there. Yes, there is something there, but I can't say what it is. That's who you are, consciousness itself.

When you remove the content from consciousness for a while, then you realize that you are consciousness. When the content, content is thoughts and emotions and thoughts and thoughts. When the content comes back, it obscures the reality that you are

consciousness and you identify with content.

And that's why some people have been able to awaken spiritually because life took away their content. They lost everything suddenly. They lost their reputation.

In other words, their name. It happens sometimes that life does these things to people. They lost their money, their possessions.

They lost even their family. They suddenly were killed in an accident, a big earthquake came, everything lost. And they sit there, their house is in ruins, everything gone.

And suddenly some of these people suddenly had a deep spiritual awakening, why? Because life took away all the things that they had identified with as themselves, as the me. And what was left was what we just did now here.

When I asked you to pretend that there's no past and future, we took away for a moment, content from your life. And when you remove content, because content is going to disappear anyway. It's not permanent.

Whatever content you have is impermanent in your life. Things come and go. Or as the Buddha says, it's impermanence is the word.

Transient, everything is transient. And that refers to content. So as long as you are identified with all the content in your life, that can go very quickly.

Even your body can go very quickly. But if you just, beyond content is consciousness itself, rather than what consciousness has identified with. And you are that, I am that.

You and I, on that level, are the same. We are, you're in essence, the essence of who you are is consciousness. Everything else is added temporarily.

It's a disguise, consciousness disguising itself as this and that and that person, appearing in this particular form. That's the play. Leela, the divine play of life, as it's called in India.

And that's fine. The play is not to be rejected. It's what you can only enjoy the play of the phenomenal existence if you know what is beyond phenomenal existence.

So it's only if you know who you are beyond all the things in your life, you can actually truly enjoy the things in your life while they last. And you don't need to cling because you know nothing is going to last. Relationships, whatever.

It's only very young people who think there are lasting things. Then you reach a certain age and you realize, oh, it's so many things have evaporated that I thought were permanent. And more things are going to evaporate.

And a few more things are going to come and then evaporate. So not to live, and your

life is no longer content-based, but essence-based. I'm giving you here in one little talk the entire essence of what spirituality really is all about.

And really, that's what it is. There's not much else that you need to know beyond that in the sense of knowledge, accumulated knowledge. It is now a question of living that.

And if you don't want to live it, that's fine. It means you have to suffer a bit more until you're ready to make this shift until the shift begins to happen. A human being needs to reach the point of readiness where they say, okay, I've done enough madness.

I've suffered enough. I'm ready for the shift. I'm ready to say, okay, this moment is all there ever is.

I might as well become friendly with it, acknowledge it, give it attention in whatever form it comes because the form is not the moment. It's the form that this moment takes, the now. It's not what happens.

The now is not what happens. It's the space in which it happens. And essentially, that space is consciousness.

Everything happens in the light of consciousness. You can say, as some philosophers have done, they question everything. Some philosophers, they said, is there anything I can be absolutely sure of?

Because everything can be doubted. I can doubt that you exist. You can doubt that I exist.

It could be a dream. Who says we are not dreaming right now? Who says that us sitting here is not a dream?

You cannot know for sure. But even if it is a dream, there must be something real there because the dream must appear to something or someone. There must be a light in which the dream appears, a space in which the dream happens.

So even if it is a dream, the one thing you cannot question is the fact of being itself. Being is. The being may be a dream or it may not be a dream.

But one thing you can be certain is that you are. I am is something that cannot be doubted. If I'm dreaming that I am, it's still, the essence of I am is still there in the dream then.

And that's an amazing thing. That's to realize there's one thing that is beyond doubt and that's I am. It's not as the philosopher Descartes said, I think therefore I am.

He confused consciousness with thinking, perhaps because he was always thinking. So he couldn't stop thinking. And then he said, okay, then if I can't, if I can't stop thinking,

then the essence of who I am must be thinking.

I think therefore I know that I am. Well, he stopped too soon. He should have taken one more step and realized that beyond thinking, there's consciousness.

And then realized, because I'm conscious, I am. Because there is consciousness, I am. I am that consciousness.

And that consciousness that people believe in our civilization, that the consciousness is a by-product of chemical reactions in the brain. And many psychologists or scientists actually doubt that there is such a thing as consciousness. They say, no, there is no consciousness.

It's just a chemical soup. But they do recognize that the brain is the most complex thing on the planet. And they'd understand a tiny fraction of it only.

So who built that incredibly complex thing through which consciousness comes, if not consciousness? So consciousness is prior to whatever appears here. And what is the relationship between the brain and consciousness?

Even some scientists are beginning to say that, recognize the possibility that consciousness may be all-pervasive throughout the universe. And the brain is like a lens through which consciousness enters this dimension. So it's like a receiver.

It reduces and receives consciousness. So when you eliminate the brain, it does not mean you eliminate consciousness. You eliminate the receiver.

Like a TV, you can smash the TV and suddenly the image disappears. But the TV didn't produce the image. So that is our meditation.

I am consciousness. Not something to believe in, but we're using those words only as a point to the essence of who you are. Thank you.

This questioner says, sometimes I wonder seeing you sitting there in your chair, untouched by any outer challenge, on what base can you tell people to accept whatever life situation they are put in? So this is where I spent my life, sitting on this chair. As long as you're here as a human, you will find there will be challenges.

And I don't sit on this chair all my life. And most importantly, I'm not telling anybody that they should be doing something. The questioner seems to think that I'm saying you should accept whatever life situation you're in.

That has two errors in it. One is there is no should. To not telling anybody what to do.

It's only a suggestion. It says, try it out. So there's no authority behind it.

Just try it out. You have to be your own authority and find the truth for yourself. All it requires is the minimum of openness that says, well, I'm ready to try it out.

See what changes in my life if I give up my continuous mental complaining about what is. I've had that for 25 years. It hasn't done much for me.

So I'm not, I can let go of that. Perhaps can try it out. And the continuous complaining hasn't improved anything in my life.

In fact, done the opposite. So I could try it. Why not try something different?

It's only a suggestion. If it's not received, that's fine too. If there is no openness and the person says, I believe what you're talking about is rubbish.

That's fine too. That's your viewpoint. I'm happy with that.

Makes no difference. I'm not, there's no should or must, just a suggestion. Another little, a little error in the question is telling people to accept whatever life situation they are in.

I don't say accept whatever life situation you're in or try to try it out, but I don't, it doesn't apply to the life situation because the life situation is in time. It has a past and a future. Your life situation may be you have a job that is very repetitive and where you're surrounded by negative people and it's boring, negative.

There's a lot of conflict continuously around you. Am I saying accept that's your life situation? You're there, that's the situation.

Or you're in a totally dysfunctional family relationship. You must accept the dysfunction in your family relation. No.

The only thing where acceptance applies is the present moment. Not the entire situation. Another example, you're sitting, you're homeless, sitting on a bench, just a few cents in your pocket.

Okay, am I saying you must accept or am I suggesting that you should accept your situation, that you are homeless, that you have failed, that you are destitute now, that you accept that the fact that you're a loser? No, these are all mental stories that you might be telling yourself. Am I asking you to accept the stories that you are telling yourself, that your life has failed, that you have achieved nothing in the 50 years that you've been here?

No, acceptance is not to be applied to that. Acceptance applies only to this moment. At this moment, you're at your place of work, surrounded by these people, and there's your tryout, taking responsibility for this moment and see if you can accept that this is where I am right now, knowing that change is desirable because you don't want to stay here forever.

Another example, I've stuck in the mud. I wrote about it somewhere. You find yourself stuck in the mud.

And so there's no point in complaining of saying how dreadful it is. It just is. Why add the dreadfulfulness to it?

It's a challenge. Of course, it's a challenge being stuck in the mud. It's a situation that requires some action unless you really want to stay there, but it's unlikely.

But in the meantime, you can accept the simple is-ness of this moment instead of adding inner resistance to it. This does not remove your ability to bring about change in the situation. In fact, it enhances your ability to bring about change in the situation.

As you all know the saying, which is very true, what you resist persists. And I'm sure many of you have already found that out in your life. And then suddenly, when you let go of resistance, you let go of an attachment to something.

I need this to happen in order to be happy. I don't want what is. I want something else.

To be okay with what is, which is the simplicity of this moment, is the beginning of true change. It does not mean that the form of this moment persists when you accept the form of this moment. If there's something that is more pleasant and better for the unfoldment of this life form, then that will come about either through action that you take or through something that happens to change the situation or both cooperating together.

But the basis for true change is freedom from negativity. And that's what acceptance implies. No negativity about what is.

And then you see what this moment requires. What is it that is required now so that life can express itself more fully or consciousness can express itself more fully through this form? It might require action.

But preceding the action is the state of alert presence. So any seemingly unpleasant situation, there is such a thing as an unpleasant situation. You could fall into a river and it's cold and wet and there you are cold and wet.

You have to do something, but complaining about it is useless. But becoming alert and present and saying, well, this is what is, and now then action takes place. So acceptance always, as the Course in Miracles has an expression, it says, single out this moment.

So out of your entire life situation, my marriage, my job, my finances, my health situation, all these are life situation. You have a health situation. Maybe your health is good.

Maybe there's something not quite right. So you have a health. You might think of it in

terms of, I have a health problem, whatever.

That's part of your life situation. Am I saying accept the fact that your whatever kidneys are not working well, or your circulation is, blood is too high, blood pressure is too high. Should you accept the fact, just this moment, not any situation, out of the single, out of the situation, you single out this moment.

And that is a new thing for many people. They don't realize that that's possible. So the focal point of your attention is not in the life situation.

Yes, you know exactly what your life situation is, but you single out, what about this moment? Can I accept this moment within my marriage, within my health situation, within my finances, which have just collapsed. And yet here I am sitting in a bus, just had to let go of my BMW.

And here I sit on a bus. So what's wrong with that? Unless the mind says there's something wrong with that.

Can I accept this moment? Yes. So you bring acceptance to this moment.

That's the basis. And then you can, you are not governed by reactivity. And then true change is possible.

You can initiate change. Sometimes change even happens without you doing anything. But I'm not telling you that that's what you should do.

You must accept this moment. Because if your preference is to reject this moment and you prefer unhappiness, that's fine too. Life wants to experience for a while through that form unhappiness, the drama, the script being acted out on stage, the stage of life.

So you are pretending to be an unhappy little me and you're playing your part, associating with other unhappy little me's because they tend to congregate. So you attract other unhappy little me's. And then you can either reinforce each other's unhappiness, which is usually good.

Or you can be in conflict, which also reinforces each other's unhappiness. Or you can be in conflict as a little unhappy group with another unhappy group. It simply means that for a while life wants to continue dreaming that particular dream, and eventually it will want to wake up.

So when the time is right, then you will see the truth of this and you'll say, okay, I'll try that. I've had enough unhappiness. I don't really need any more.

That's really all that's required, that you've had enough unhappiness. Do you want any more? No, I'd rather not.

Well, so how do you, then don't generate it. You don't want any more unhappiness, don't generate it. Because it's not the situation that causes the unhappiness, it's my reaction that causes the unhappiness.

Even if you're in prison, it is. Nobody could call it a great, it's not a great thing. It's good, I'm so good that I'm in prison.

I love it here. No, but it is, you can come to a simple acceptance. I mentioned in the New Earth, three levels of relating to the present moment.

One is the simple acceptance of what is. If you can't enjoy the present moment, which may be the case sometimes, I'm not saying you can't enjoy the present moment. You must enjoy this moment.

Perhaps you can't enjoy it. If you've just fallen into a cold puddle and there you stand, don't know where to go. You can't enjoy your freezing cold and shivering.

You can enjoy, no. But you can accept, that's what is. And the moment you accept, even there, you can sense an inner peace in the background.

And then there are other situations that can actually be enjoyed. Many, probably most. And you'll see that where you cannot enjoy is a minority of situations.

Relatively small number of situations you just can't enjoy that are physically unpleasant, but you can still accept. So you can bring acceptance to the present moment or you can bring enjoyment of simple things. It's not the big things that are really, truly the joyful things.

It's noticing all the little things in life, that's at least how I experience it, where true enjoyment lies. Just raindrops dripping, listening to the wind, or just the simple stillness of a room and just a piece of furniture, and it's there in its simple beingness, there it is. And a glass of water, and this, if you really looked, it's beautiful.

It's all beautiful. And so you enjoy the simplicity of a scent, a smell of something, of doing a simple, performing a simple action, and enjoy, you're not performing the action as a means to an end. You actually enjoy doing what you're doing.

You bring enjoyment. And so you see true joy consists of many, many, many little things in life. If you wait for one big thing to feel joy, then you may have to wait for a long time.

And when the big thing comes, before you know it, it's over. I'm waiting for the great wedding, the wedding, my wedding or somebody else's wedding. I'm waiting for the, that'll be, it's all great.

And before you know it, it's over. And even on the day, maybe things go wrong and suddenly the bride or the groom are unhappy. Oh, this shouldn't be happening.

The photographer hasn't turned up. The cake has fallen off the table. Oh, it's my whole, my whole, I've been looking forward to this day.

It's all spoiled. And if it all goes well, but even then the day soon will be over. And then the next day you wake up and it's just the first day of your married life.

Was that it? What's now? What now?

What now? So there's such a thing as an anti-climax, that's the expression. And then you have to look for some other high.

Let's go somewhere. Where can we go? Okay, let's go to Hawaii.

That must be great. So let's book it. In five weeks we'll be there.

Okay, can't wait, right? Can't wait. You miss the five weeks, all the little beautiful things you miss.

And finally you get there. But then you don't get the room that you booked in the hotel. You get a different room, hasn't got a good view.

Wherever you go, little things go wrong. So if you look for a situation to satisfy you, then you're always out. You're lining yourself up for disappointment.

So paying attention to small things. Life consists of small things. It's just a succession of small things.

Even for somebody who is, let's say, a great famous person in the public eye, you think everything this person does is so significant. Every day there's something big. But if you analyze the big thing every day, let's say you're the president of the United States and now you're giving a big speech there and in the afternoon you give a big speech and then you meet the king of so-and-so and the president of such-and-such and then you phone this person.

But if you analyze all this is so big and significant in your life, if you look at each of these events, you see that it also consists of little things. You pick up the phone and say, put me through to the president of France or whoever you want to talk to. And there you have another voice talking and you are talking.

Or you step into the limo and there you are sitting in the limo driving somewhere and then you step out of the limo and then you face an audience, you go up to the stage. That's, it's always just a little, all that consists of just little steps. So what you do really isn't that important but the energy that flows into what you do, that you bring to it, that you manifest is primary.

Okay, so I'm still sitting on this chair unchallenged by anything. I mustn't move because

then the challenges start, I suppose.

[Speaker 4] (4:56:48 - 4:57:16)

I can walk into a room and feel other people's pain. And when I was younger, I identified with that and thought there was something wrong with me. Now that I'm older and have more experience, I realize that I'm not the only one who feels that way.

That it's not me. So I've disidentified with it but I still have to deal with it. So any advice?

[Speaker 1] (4:57:17 - 5:03:47)

Thank you. Well, the vital thing, you're already doing that, the disidentification. And as presence grows, you are less affected by it.

It takes a little longer for a woman because there's more sensitivity to energy fields in the female form than it is in the male form. So for a woman, it takes a little longer to need, a woman would need more presence because there's such sensitivity in many women to energy fields. The feminine has that sensitivity.

And so you can feel it more than a man can, generally speaking. The main thing is already, you're practicing already, which is the disidentification from it so that there is awareness and it. You haven't become it.

You are the awareness and there's it. It is allowed to be in the field or the space of awareness. No longer that problematic because it is not who you are.

And so negativity, of course, is contagious, highly contagious. The immunity gradually has become more present. The immunity is there because intense presence is no longer susceptible to that illness, the negativity.

And so when you feel a negative energy field, you touch this, you set a room that you go into. There are also other energy fields in this. Even when there's a full moon, for some reason, it seems to influence some people's behavior.

Lunatic, that comes from the word lunar, the moon. When we were in Chicago two years ago with Oprah, one day there was a full moon and I read in the Chicago paper that on that night, there were something like 15 murders on that night. And all kinds of energy fields impinge upon us, but there needs to be something in us also that resonates with it.

So as your pain body gradually shrinks, also you'll find there's less in you that resonates with negativity. The pain body, of course, takes a while to dissolve. It dissolves through presence.

But as long as there's some pain body there, there may well be something that resonates with certain forms of negativity. And then you feel it. It's nothing personal.

Even the pain body is not personal. Nothing is really personal. And then as the pain body dissolves, then you find you're free.

You can go into a negative energy field and you're fine. It's just, not that you build up, presence doesn't build up a barrier around yourself. It's not like that.

It's just, it passes through. It's a different frequency. It can't hang on to anything inside you anymore.

So it goes through you. I haven't studied astrology, but it sometimes seems to me that there may be some truth in some of that. And the less presence there is in you, the more it applies to you.

And the same applies to the full moon. The less presence there is in you, the more you are susceptible to these energy fields. And the moment you think a negative thought, especially if you think more than one negative thought, it goes on for a few minutes and then it leads to another and another.

You connect to negativity and a million other people in the same city. Kind of. And then you are in it.

Nothing personal. And then people are surprised if they can't get out. It's not just yours.

You have connected with the whole city or beyond. That's why it's so important to keep yourself as clear as possible through presence. The less you carry inside, the less likely it is that it'll affect you.

Well, now you may still be able to feel it, but it does not impinge upon you, especially if you're, as a woman, you probably are still able to feel the negativity, but then you no longer need to, there's nothing in you where it gets stuck. So it passes through. You know it's passing through, there it is, but it has nothing in you to hang on to.

It can't attach itself to anything. And the same applies when people are negative and their dialogue is negative, what they speak to you is negative. And again, if you are in the state of alert attention, there's no negative thought in you that this can connect to.

And so you're immune, so to speak. The mental negativity can't hang on, can't lodge itself in your mind. If there's nothing, there's no frequency in there that it corresponds to.

[Speaker 4] (5:03:51 - 5:04:07)

I've been told by some spiritual teachers that there's something in my system that is trying to take this on from other people to rid them of it. But I mean, it's nothing I do consciously, and I don't even know if that's true.

[Speaker 1] (5:04:09 - 5:14:35)

Well, to some extent, presence does that. But presence doesn't take it on, it dissolves it, not only for yourself, but wherever you go, you go there as a field of presence into an energy field. To some extent, something happens, it dissolves through presence.

And so, yes, that's a beautiful thing. You don't take it on. You don't need to suffer for others, but you can let go of suffering for others.

So you let go of suffering. The same thing you do, for example, when you sit with a person who is in suffering, it is your job to relinquish resistance. And if they can't do it, you can do it for them.

Enter the state of surrender. Do it when you're with somebody who is dying, when you're with somebody who is seriously ill, or has had some other kind of disaster, or is just completely unhappy. So be with that person, and become very still and very alert.

And that means you surrender for them. And very often that has an effect, it affects them, it burns up some of the suffering. It invites them also into that space.

Sometimes they're able to join you in that space, but even if they are not, it does burn up suffering. That's the most beautiful gift you can give, is your presence. So you bring that undiluted presence, just that.

I have the decade, this is Wolfgang Achlewitz. I have the decade long experience that fear arises when I talk or should talk in front of many people in similar situations. I cannot deprogram myself to accept this and speak.

What can I do? The easiest thing is to sit in front of a group of people and talk about what you feel at this moment. So you would say, as I sit here, my hands are wet, I can feel trembling, there's a panic, I'm sweating, because I'm talking to you.

And the more you talk about what's actually there, the more quickly you actually transcend it and you connect with people. So the simple truth, I'm so nervous. Okay, it's okay to be nervous.

You begin to accept the way things are. This is what, it's not that I should be, no, just speak from your heart, completely honest and open, and then you connect with people and after a few minutes, if you have something to say, it'll come out of you. If you have nothing to say, then you better have a script to read.

I remember when I had my, I was very much ego trapped in my 20s. Even talking in a room where there are four or five people discussing something, I found it difficult. It was to me almost like public speaking.

So I was, should I say something or not? And often I didn't. Fear dissolves when you start doing what you fear instead of thinking about it, as long as it doesn't kill you.

Often the doing is the answer rather than the thinking about. Do and then see. I had a friend who came to see me regularly where somebody would come for spiritual advice and so one day he met a woman on the internet and then every week he came, he told me the relationship was getting deeper and deeper and I said, what relationship?

Well, he said, well, we are talking to each other and then beginning to talk even on the phone after a while. He said, now I'm really falling in love with this woman and I think about her all the time. I said, no, you're not thinking about this woman, you're thinking about, there's a mental image in your head of who that woman is.

So, and then he said, yes, but I'm married, should I see her? I said, it's all. I said, go and, you must meet her, I'm not even talking to you about it anymore.

I said, go and meet her and he did and that was the end of the relationship. It ended after one minute. And then I stopped seeing people individually.

All problems are really, this is perhaps a more obvious kind of mind created problem, but all problems are actually created by unconscious thinking, all problems. When that goes and you step out of compulsive unconscious thinking, all you're left with is whatever is right now, a situation that you either take action or you refrain from taking action. Some situations you need to take action, other situations there's nothing I can do right now.

So it's either one or the other, neither is a problem. Action or refraining from action, there's no problem. If it's an emergency, obviously it's action that's required.

Others, where action is possible, action happens. And if it's not, nothing, nothing I can do. Surrender, accept, let go, be just present.

And even if it seems unacceptable, then you have to go even deeper because some situations seem unacceptable. They are just, if you accept the unacceptable, you go very deep. Unacceptable meaning the death of a loved one, your own approaching death, the loss of your precious car.

Unacceptable, then you need to go very, really deep because that takes you into awakening. And often doing isn't possible anymore. When death approaches, to still think in terms of doing is absurd, as they still do in hospitals where they give you potent drugs just so that you can live another two or three months and suffer.

Or even six months or a year because death is unacceptable. To the Western mind, still, to a large extent. And it basically thinks you do until the very end, you have to do something.

But yes, doing is fine, but there comes a time when doing needs to be relinquished. And that's beautiful. And that's where real realization happens.

I envisage whether it will come through this form or through some of the forms here, places where people learn how to die beautifully, where they learn about old age so that it's not just something that, where people are put away and just waiting for the unacceptable to happen while they watch television. But true places of spirituality where they use the great opportunity that's there in old age as the body begins to dissolve, great opportunity for awakening. The flowering of life, it could be.

[Speaker 5] (5:14:56 - 5:16:18)

I have a question regarding doing good and doing bad in the context of the world, whether I'm a child or a CEO and the attitude of the universe toward that behavior and the role of that behavior. And also how, on one hand, grace and on the other hand, consequence behave. Together.

Okay. I mean, is it, you know, with a child, if they behave in a way that's dangerous, is it better to show them grace and just give them a hug? Or does it serve them better to provide a consequence?

And the same with a CEO who perhaps inflicts suffering on individuals. How is the world best served? Is it through offering consequences or through showing grace?

[Speaker 1] (5:16:18 - 5:16:28)

I see. I'm beginning to understand what you mean. The first part was a little general, so I couldn't get, but now when you mentioned the child, then it was helpful.

[Speaker 5] (5:16:34 - 5:17:02)

It seems like sometimes people who do bad in this world are rewarded materially, often, and some who do good live without much, much material reward or recognition. There just seems to be I don't know, I'm confused about it. I don't know if that makes sense.

[Speaker 1] (5:17:04 - 5:17:16)

Okay, it's always easier to answer something that's a concrete situation. So for example, with your child, can you give just one example of choice of behavior?

[Speaker 5] (5:17:17 - 5:17:19)

Well, there are some children who bite.

[Speaker 1] (5:17:20 - 5:17:20)

Bite?

[Speaker 5] (5:17:20 - 5:17:20)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (5:17:21 - 5:17:22)

Okay, now we're getting somewhere.

[Speaker 5] (5:17:22 - 5:18:15)

There are some children who bite other children. And it's true. And they do it, some do it just because they're still sensing with their mouths and others do it out of anger, but it's a behavior that's harmful and frightening for others.

So parents certainly are confused about whether the child is able to understand consequences or whether it's just more love, more love, more love that's going to help that child to grow out of that particular behavior or running into a street or breaking away in a parking lot. Any of those behaviors are dangerous and it's important to modify them. But is it through firmness or is it through grace and love?

[Speaker 1] (5:18:15 - 5:18:18)

Okay, now I understand completely what you're asking.

[Speaker 5] (5:18:19 - 5:18:19)

Or even stealing.

[Speaker 1] (5:18:19 - 5:26:00)

You needed to mention the biting, then now I get it. Okay. Well, that's a very subtle balance because of course certain behaviors have consequences.

And if that's completely ignored on the side of the parent, then eventually the consequences of that type of behavior will come worse. So at some point they will learn that biting others is wrong and they will experience the consequences. If you don't show them the consequences or make them aware of what they are doing, we'll talk about how in a second.

If you don't, then eventually when they go to kindergarten or school, eventually another child will bite them back, which may be a more painful way of experiencing the karmic result of their behavior. So the more you wait, the more painful the karmic result of your behavior becomes. Or youngsters who are left free to do whatever they like.

And eventually the parents try to shelter them from all consequences of their actions and protect them from consequences. And eventually then they will do something and then society will show them in the form of a police coming to your door that there are consequences to actions. And then the karma might have worsened by then because the

consequences may be, and what they do to others may be far worse than what they would have done at the age of six.

So eventually the universe will show you the consequences. So it's good for a parent in a gentle way to show the child the consequences of certain unconscious actions, if only not just to protect them from karmic retribution at a later stage, but also sometimes simply to protect them from themselves because they might get themselves into a very dangerous place if you don't. And I've seen some parents that allow their children to walk along the seawall or whatever, and they can go to one false step and they would be gone.

But the parent just didn't want to interfere. So they lose a balance between allowing and showing the child what is not right and protecting the child. Now, the important thing is then when you show the child what is wrong, that the showing does not come from a place of fear, because if it comes from a place of fear in you, and that could be, for example, when you see the child going close to a precipice or whatever, or close to the traffic or the road.

And sometimes I observe mothers or fathers who become almost hysterical because out of fear, and then they run up to the child and they shake the child. Don't you ever do that again. That's for the child, it's a dreadful trauma.

It's almost worse than being run over by a car. Or it's the emotional equivalent of being run over by a car. Can you imagine the trauma inflicted on a little child when a big grownup shouts at them?

And there's an outflow of extremely destructive fear energy onto the child. And that moment within a space of one minute, the child's pain body is growing, it's absorbing all that. And then they are surprised if a little later the child goes into extreme negative emotions and moods and shouts and screams.

The child has already absorbed the fear of the mother. But of course the mother wanted to do well. It wanted to protect the child, but the mother was unconscious.

Doesn't realize that the protection is almost worse than that which she's being protected against. It's almost like using an insecticide that is far worse than the insects. And so the question then, your question, grace is very important, you used that word.

Grace must be part of the showing. Grace is a compassionate space where you recognize that the child does not know yet. You don't punish the behavior.

You simply show clearly that this is wrong in the same way that we have to show our dog. In some ways, dogs also need to be taught that certain behaviors have consequences. So you don't hit a dog, well, I don't know, maybe if you have a put book, what are they called?

Pit bull, you might occasionally have to slap because it might have enormous energy, but our dog doesn't need that. Our dog comes, we hold out a little treat and usually the dog will go, ah! And sometimes it gets, you get your finger in there and that is karmically not good for the dog.

So, we say, we say, when it happens, we go, ouch! And the dog is a little bit shocked and realizes on some level that she has just hurt you. You go, ouch!

The dog, and the dog realizes, oh, I shouldn't have done that. That's a very gentle way of doing it. So the grace, when you do a child, the worst response is always the one that comes out of fear because out of fear also comes anger and so on.

So when you pull the child back from the road, getting too close to the traffic, and you might have to act fast, but the important thing is that just enough consciousness in you that you do not put fear onto the child. So you pull back in awareness and then, oh, this is very dangerous, but not the fear, just an alertness rather than the fear, that's grace. And so that's the, every parent has to walk this, find this balance, of course, between interfering and stopping the child and showing the child consequences and allowing the child.

There needs to be a balance. It's not always easy, not always immediately obvious which one, whether to allow or whether not to not allow. But if you're not allow, the important thing is that it doesn't come from negative reaction.

So that's the, might maybe helpful a little bit for you. Again, self-awareness is the key, especially in a moment of crisis. You need to be doubly alert within yourself.

The more critical a situation is, the more alertness is required.

[Speaker 8] (5:26:19 - 5:26:43)

My question to you is, in the book, The Secret, it's based on the law of attraction, where you attract everything into your life. Whereas your book, The Power of Now, is being in the moment and letting the universe guide your life. So I just want to know your thoughts on that, on the difference.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (5:27:00 - 5:43:44)

Well, as we can see, if we look around, the universe or life creates life forms everywhere, wherever we look. So the universe loves to create form. It seems.

It can also create form through the human form. Humans can create as they do. And humans are not separate from the totality of the universe.

So there isn't human creation and the universe creating. It's all one. It's the totality.

We are the universe. You are the universe. So when you create, or when I create something externally, whatever it is, any structure that you build from simple thing, building something, or using your mind, your thoughts to help in the act of creation, to create something on the mental level before it becomes physical form, that's a way in which the universe can create through the human form.

I could almost say indirectly or secondary creation. You may have heard the expression, we become co-creators with God. Your question is really, is it up to us to initiate the act of creation or should we simply rest in presence and then see what happens?

The foundation, of course, for creation is resting in presence. That's the very foundation, because resting in presence, that is touching the source of, true source of creativity and the true source of fulfillment or satisfaction, which is not form, but the formless life itself. It is essentially fulfilling to sense the timeless presence that we could call I am, to sense that directly in yourself, not as an object in your awareness, but as yourself.

So it's a self realization of consciousness, not a subject object realization. And that is essentially happiness, if we want to use that word, aliveness, fulfillment. And that is essentially your identity, your true identity, which has no form.

That's why the Buddhists say there is no self. Self in the sense of anything that you consider yourself that has form, psychological or physical form is not who you are. The essential self, which the Buddhists deny and just call emptiness, or which in India is called the Atman, that is the formless and that's the very basis.

If you go into, if you create before having consciously realized the source of creation, then you belong to all those billions of humans who create out of the state of identification identification with form, which we could call the ego state. But that's also the universe. If the universe did not want to experience itself as the egoic entity also, then it would not be, the ego would not exist.

So it seems the universe loves that dream, or which becomes a nightmare sooner or later of the egoic consciousness. So whenever you create, because you believe that the object of your creation is going to make you happy or fulfilled, then you create out of the egoic consciousness and it's stressful and frustrating and never really fulfilling. But that's the dream of the ignorance of who you are.

And perhaps the universe needs to dream that dream and then wake up out of that dream into a conscious realization of itself. And that also is happening through the human form. So the humans can create out of the ignorance, identification with form, in which case also they create a lot of havoc.

Of course, they create a lot of conflict because the more deeply you identified with form,

the more you come into conflict with other forms that are also deeply identified with their form. That it's not just the individual form, it's also the collective forms of tribes, religions, religions within religions. You see what's when you listen to the news, you can see one Islamic sect is killing another one, and they both, even within the same religion, they hate each other.

And this has happened. And that is complete identification with form. It's not, it's happened, it has happened in Christianity.

In Christianity, at the moment, they may not be killing each other. They did not enough of that in the Middle Ages, but they still, many still hate each other. And whoever does not agree with your little group, of course, is the antichrist.

That's a nice word you can impose on others. Buddhists haven't come up with that yet. I have never heard of the anti-Buddha, Buddha.

So, and that's within the totality, that's fine too, because that's the dream of identification with form. And how do I know that? Because I've been in that dream, and I've come out of that dream of identification with form.

And what is true for the individual is true for the totality. So it's a collective dream. It's also an awakening that happens when the suffering and the madness becomes so pronounced that it forces you to open your eyes.

And then you look and say, what am I doing? What are we doing? What have I done?

What have we done? So this happens when the suffering becomes very acute, as happened, for example, in a very large scale in the 20th century, when after the first world war, when for the first time, the tools of technology and science were used in warfare. There had been warfare for thousands of years before, but now it became magnified through the tools of science and technology, bombs, gas, poisonous substances, artillery, tanks, submarines, machine guns, and suddenly they created havoc that they'd never seen before on such a huge scale, millions and millions of dead, and nobody actually remembered how did it all start.

What was the beginning of the first war? They just drifted into it totally blindly, identified with their little tribe, their little nation. That's one way of creating, and whenever you have not touched the source of life within yourself, touched it, realized it, live from it, then you create and add to the karmic burden on the planet, because whatever you create has negativity attached to it, and karma creates further resistance.

It provokes resistance, creates more resistance, and though contributes to the continuation of the dream. So to put it very simply, when you think something is going to make you happy, if you create this or that, that's not going to happen. That's the ignorance.

If you're looking for fulfillment through something that you imagine you're going to create, it's not going to fulfill you, it can't. You have to come from that state of fulfillment already. Then a different kind of creation can happen.

You could, of course, just sit for the rest of your life somewhere and hope that somebody will put some food into your mouth, as if you go to India and you're truly emanate peace, then that will happen. They will put food into your mouth. If you do it in a Western country, it probably won't happen, but they'll put you away, and then they'll put food in your mouth.

That's okay. Most people find that even if they rest in presence, at some point, the impulse to act will be there. It could be action on a small scale, very small scale.

It could be action on a larger scale. It may not immediately be action. It may be an inspiration or an idea or a vision that suddenly rises into your mind, and then you contemplate that and it feels empowered.

And it is not something that says you need to achieve that in order to become happy or fulfilled. The energy that goes with it is so empowering that it is the same as if you had already achieved it. That's the act of creation has that energy that flows with it.

It is as powerful as the actual achievement in itself, if not more so, because the actual achievement is already the end of the creative process. The moment you have completed the creative act, you're already at the end of it. And what now?

So the empowerment is in the doing, not the arriving. That's the egoic delusion is that the empowerment is in the arriving, but the empowerment is in the doing, in the act of creation. It's not just the empowerment.

It's also the joy and aliveness that comes with it. So you don't need the, as it's called in the Bhagavad Gita, the fruit of the action. You're not looking or are more focused on the fruit of the action that it's called in the Bhagavad Gita, which means the outcome, the desired outcome.

You're not, your attention is not mainly in the desired outcome. Your attention is on the doing itself. Although yes, you have a vision of what it is that wants to come into being, but your attention is fully in the doing and the enjoyment and the empowerment of doing.

It can be very intense, the act of creation, the energy that flows into it can be very intense. It's so intense that it might even look to an outsider as if you were stressed, but you're not. But there can be that intensity of creation.

So when something comes through or you, in whatever form. And that's beautiful. Then you are the universe, the creative, the one intelligence, the one creative intelligence is

creating through the human form.

And that's beautiful. So it says deep enjoyment in the act of creation. It's the, the motivation is not egoic anymore.

The motivation is not a sense of lack or fulfillment or of unfulfillment, but enjoyment. So in that sense, this, the secret, I don't remember if the secret talks about that, the book, that the foundation is the present moment as oneness with that. And then creation is fine when you no longer believe that certain things that you add to your life or create are going to make you happy or fulfilled.

So that's the difference. So the question then, do I need to make plans? I can't answer that as such.

You may be one of the few who will rest in being for the rest of their lives in that, in this bodily form and just sit somewhere or walk around. And that's fine too, but it's less likely. There are very few.

It happens, maybe in India happens more than in the West, just as well because the environment there is more receptive to that kind of thing. As for example, Ramana Maharshi, the, some of you may know, have heard the famous, the wonderful spiritual teacher who passed away in the early fifties. He just sat, when he was a young boy, he left his home.

He had a realization of being, of awakening. And he sat next to a temple away from his hometown. He left his family.

Nobody knew where he was. And he just, there was no movement into action, just being, no speaking, didn't want to eat, just bliss of total oneness with the source. But after a few years, he started to put food in his mouth and then he started to speak.

So a little bit of doing happened even to him, but no planning. So in his case, he didn't say, okay, I'm going to set up an ashram. That happened by itself.

The ashram organically grew. So it can happen to some people who are just either totally present and then something happens around you. In most cases, some kind of doing will be involved.

It could be a spontaneous unfolding of what is happening already. Let's say you're playing an instrument and you love it so much that you just, you enjoy playing it. And then gradually music comes to you.

You compose something or spontaneously play. And suddenly, without any vision of what you want to achieve, things can grow. This can happen.

It has happened to people. Just the intense enjoyment of the doing leading to organic

growth into form. The Beatles loved making their music and I don't think they had necessarily a vision that we are going to be the greatest ever, but it happened out of the deep enjoyment and the intensity of that act of creation.

[Speaker 11] (5:43:45 - 5:43:45)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (5:44:09 - 5:47:07)

As usual, we start with a moment of silence, which implies also inner silence as much as that is possible and becoming comfortable inside yourself, at home within your skin. When I chose the topic for today, I suddenly had the image of Stargate. God, we talked about the portal.

So I had this, suddenly this image of a kind of gate that you walk through. And the next idea that came into my mind was, well, that would be an interesting film. And within 30 seconds, this story arose that one could show in a science fiction film or series, which could be called Nowgate or something like that.

Or the Dow gate or the mind gate.

[Speaker 10] (5:47:08 - 5:47:09)

To make more.

[Speaker 1] (5:47:11 - 6:01:57)

So the story goes like this. A terrestrial finds a stranded, highly advanced ET somewhere on the planet, helps him or her to get back to his or her UFO. And as a reward, the ET gives him a little device and says, when you're in danger and demonstrates it, it's a little mysterious looking thing.

Whenever you're in a difficult situation, you can use this. And he gives him a short demonstration, but he doesn't yet know what exactly it is. And then to cut the long story short, it turns out that when he presses his little device, it's amazing this can come in half a minute, this sort of thing.

He presses the little device, a kind of luminous space develops, not quite as like in Stargate, a little bit more transparent. So it throws up this kind of doorway or gateway and he has to step into it. But unlike Stargate, when he comes out the other end, and then once he's come out the other end of the thing, the gate collapses.

But once he comes out the other end, he's in exactly the same place. And the only thing that has changed is his state of consciousness. And so he uses it in when life becomes difficult, a conflict, whatever, some form of suffering arises.

And so he steps and then he goes to the bathroom and he uses that, he steps through. And then it's exactly the same reality to start with. And then so when his state of consciousness has become rooted in presence through this, first of all, he becomes peaceful inside.

So the first thing that happens when he goes through the gate of now is he becomes peaceful and accepting of now, no matter what the situation is. So that's the first change that he immediately notices. And then he goes back into whatever situation it is that caused the conflict or the suffering or whatever it is.

And then he acts upon the situation, but his actions and his words carry the energy of that state of consciousness now. And so he finds that after a while, the situation becomes transformed because his state of consciousness has become transformed. So he does enter another dimension, but this entering another dimension is primarily within.

And he also experiences, we can now beginning to leave behind the science fiction film because really it is also an analogy. It's not just an idea for a science fiction movie. I'm also using it as an analogy for us here to look upon accessing the portal of now, finding the portal of now.

And once you have found it, you walk through it. It's a kind of analogy. Finding it means realizing the possibility that there is a different state of consciousness.

And immediately you enter the state of aligning yourself with the now. You go through the gate and you see no longer resisting the now. That's the beginning of the arising of the new state of consciousness.

The dropping of resistance, seeing that it is futile because what is is the most simple equation. I don't know anything about mathematics, but let's say let's have a mathematical equation from somebody who can't go much beyond addition and subtraction and multiplication. That's me.

Finding a mathematical equation for the spiritual dimension or entering it, which is what it is, which is what is equals is. And you can't argue with that. You can, but it hurts.

So that's the equation for constructing the now gate. It's handed to me by some ET. And it's a little thing that ET can do.

Easy to forget, but once you remember what is is and what is is, whatever is the case right now. By realizing that, you enter through this, you go through the gate. And then suddenly peace, arises inside or spaciousness because you become the space for what is.

You become the space for what is. You become present. And then whatever you say or do is charged with presence.

Or it may be that for a while you don't say or do anything. Presence has two aspects to it, which I haven't very often spoken about, but it's important, maybe never, I don't know. There's the still, absolutely unmoving aspect of presence.

Absolute, just absolute empowered stillness, which comes with acceptance of what is. Nothing to do, nothing to say, just resting within that field of now. And then there's the dynamic aspect of presence.

And that depends on whatever is required in any given situation. In the dynamic, when presence suddenly becomes dynamic, it flows into action, what you say or do. Sometimes it can be so intense that it becomes totally dynamic.

This may be experienced by a mountain climber. The mountain climber who needs to be absolutely and utterly present, if he climbs up the wall with every movement, experiences the presence in its dynamic aspect. Or anybody engaged in a dangerous activity that requires your total presence, that's the dynamic aspect of presence, dynamic manifestation.

And then there's the presence at rest. And very often, there's a balance between the two. Let's say you're sitting at a conference table discussing this or that.

This is a good example of experiencing presence in its balanced state. Whatever it is that you're discussing at the conference table, it's important. And there may be people who are totally involved in the discussion and think they are present, but they are not.

Because there needs to be some awareness of the space in the background. Even while you're discussing something else, you're discussing whatever it is that the mind thinks is important. The question is, is there still some space?

Do you, are you bringing that spaciousness into that situation? Or are you completely absorbed in reacting and thinking? So that applies right now.

Could be at any time you have to check within yourself whether there is some space inside you while you are engaged in dealing with the things of this world. So we have, we can look at it as three areas, ways of accessing the portal of the present. One is through what action, whatever you need to do.

We'll be talking about that. Presence flowing into what you do, say, action. And you have also presence that arises when you are confronted with a situation, seemingly that comes to you.

It's not something that you do. It's something that is inflicted upon you. So you suddenly find yourself in this or that situation.

So accessing presence, finding the portal of now when you are active is one thing.

Finding the portal of now when life brings you, confronts you with a challenge is another area where it is important and easy to miss. And then we have a third area of consciously choosing that state of consciousness when there's nothing much going on in your life, no action is required right now, and you're not in a particularly challenging situation.

And then you go and you, instead of what normally a person would do when not confronted with something that needs to be done right now or not in a difficult situation, usually what happens is people drift off into some kind of dreamland. So let's talk about that area first. And how much of that you experience in your daily life depends how busy you are.

If you are busy continuously, you may not even have a lot of time in your life when there's nothing particular that you need to do. So that varies. Some people are so busy, there's not a moment when there's nothing to do.

Well, at least what their mind tells them will come to that. But most people have a little bit of, occasionally, you have a period of time when there's not much to do right now, either because you're stuck somewhere waiting to get from A to B. And while you're on the plane or in the car or wherever, there's not that much you can do, or you arrive at home and you've done all the things that you had to do during the day, and you find yourself with a little bit of spare time, as it's called.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Spare change.

[Speaker 10] (6:01:57 - 6:02:01)

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

[Speaker 1] (6:02:01 - 6:03:03)

So usually people then will fill that spare time with something to, what they call, relax. They look for something to help them relax. And that, of course, a very common thing is television.

Another very common thing to relax is have a drink, spirit drink, alcohol. Ha, ha. That is initially experienced as relaxing.

You could also, some people start making phone calls. Nothing much to say, but let's just call up a few people. And you say, what's up?

Well, I'm doing this and that, and what are you doing? Well, I'm hanging out, chilling out here.

[Speaker 10] (6:03:04 - 6:03:06)

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

[Speaker 1] (6:03:06 - 6:03:11)

Okay, and then they talk and talk, and then you put the phone, who else can I call now?

[Speaker 10] (6:03:11 - 6:03:13)

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

[Speaker 1] (6:03:14 - 6:03:16)

What's up? And so on.

[Speaker 10] (6:03:17 - 6:03:21)

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

[Speaker 1] (6:03:22 - 6:26:10)

Just filling your spare time with something. And then finally you get tired and you go to bed and that's basically your life. It's the busyness and the spare time, and then you go to sleep, and then it starts again.

Busyness, spare time, sleep. 20 years later, it's still like that. And finally you retire from work and then you end up with mostly spare time and not knowing what to do with it.

Now you have a whole day to fill up. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. And you've missed something very vital, and that's the possibility of truly experiencing life, the aliveness of life, the depth of life, the power of life.

So let's now see where, look at what you can do. I'm not saying don't do anything like that anymore when you have nothing in particular to do, a weekend or in the evening. I'm not saying don't watch TV anymore.

Don't let yourself be hypnotized by television anymore. Occasionally you can if you want to, but you can see what television, which is the favorite way of relaxing, in quotation marks, what it does to you, it kind of puts you to sleep. It's a hypnotic, it has an hypnotic effect on you.

You know what a hypnotist does? He shows you one, he says, focus on this, on this finger, and then follow it with your eyes. That's what they used to do, or pendulum.

And then you go, and then the hypnotist says, and now you're beginning to be very relaxed, and you find yourself, their eyes are beginning to close, or they may even stay open and you'll still be asleep. Okay, that's it. And that's what TV does.

You stare at the screen for hours on end, and your own mind activity completely subsides. You become free of this problem-making entity in your head. It's wonderful, isn't it?

You become free of the me, of the self, and you're watching other people's problems, not me. They have the same problems as you, but it's the same thing basically, but unfortunately you are not involved in it, so you can relax. So you're linking into a collectively produced mind stream of mental, a lot of mental activity, but fortunately it's not yours.

You've given up yours, and you let yourself be taken over by somebody else's mind stream. So you haven't left the mind stream. You're only not, you're only temporarily free of the heaviness of the self.

The self has gone to sleep for a while. Unless you watch politicians on TV, in which case the me will still occasionally come in and comment. So it's an illusory freedom from mind.

You're not really free from mind. You're just as deeply immersed in the mind stream as before, and you are in a state of semi-consciousness. So it's relaxing, and eventually depletes you of energy and of creativity.

So why not set aside in your daily existence a little bit of time for the present moment and for experiencing the power of the present moment, either at the end of the day or in the middle of the day when there are periods when you can't be busy because of the situation. If you're in a traffic jam, it's hard to go anywhere. It's just not moving, or you're waiting at the airport, or you're waiting in the doctor's waiting room, or you are wherever you are, then there's a moment of cessation of the normal activity.

Then use the naturally occurring moments of cessation of activity, and instead of feeling anxious that you're not being active, embrace the non-activity and see if you can find the portal, the gate into now. So what do you do? A little thing you can do is look around.

One portal of the now is wherever you are and whatever surrounds you, to become conscious of it. And the moment you do, this could be in a waiting at the airport. You're sitting in the lounge immersed in feeling anxious.

Why not, okay, let's see what's up. Let me become conscious of my surroundings. You're looking at people.

In an airport lounge, the most obvious thing you see is people. You notice a shift from before. You were half semi-conscious of your surroundings because you were immersed in thinking or arguing with the situation.

But there shouldn't be a delay. They should, but there is. And then you remember what

is is, the magical formula.

And suddenly you sit in the same airport lounge and instead of being angry inside yourself with all the inefficiency of all these people or the weather, shouldn't be snowing. They should build better planes, whatever the mind says. And suddenly what is is, okay, and what is is this moment.

Okay, so I might as well wake up to this moment and look around externally, first of all. There's no stress in this room. People may be stressed, but there is no stress that you can actually see.

Alertness, the first thing that comes is when you become conscious of this moment is a certain alertness arises that wasn't there before. That's the sign that you are stepping through this portal. The alertness is what shows you you have stepped through the portal of now.

Alertness is the key. Alertness, I can demonstrate easily, I sometimes do. Alertness means some of the consciousness that had been trapped in thinking becomes freed for experiencing or perceiving.

So when all consciousness is trapped in thinking, you look like this, you look dull and lifeless, absent. And if you talk to somebody, often you find even then people are absent in their mind while they talk to you. There's a kind of deadened look because all their attention is in here and just a little bit of attention, they just barely see you.

And what they see is their image of who they think you are. So they're not really looking at you. So they're barely there.

Or they're so concerned with what they want from you or from the situation that all their attention, which is thought, all their attention is there. They are not there for you. They don't acknowledge your presence.

They're absorbed in their mind. We really need to talk about, let's talk about this. So it's all, your mind sucks up your entire consciousness like a parasite.

And here you say, okay, I'm going to free some of that by becoming present to the isness of now. So the alertness is a sign that some of the trapped consciousness has become freed. And first it becomes free for sense perception.

And when you, the predominant sense perception is visual. So an important portal in everyday life is visual. Let's start with visual sense perception to truly look rather than think about something else or even think about what you're looking at, which isn't present either, not yet, to actually just look wherever you are.

You're beginning to be there. And if you have a, wherever you are, doesn't matter what

you're looking, what it is, whatever is around you, you begin to look. And then you notice something perhaps.

There are two dimensions to the looking. One is what you are seeing. And then another very subtle dimension is yourself.

You are an essential part of that. But what is the yourself when you're not thinking about your problems? Who are you when you're not thinking through your problems and desires and fears?

You're not looking at the world through your desires and fears, but you're just looking through consciousness. So you're not looking through the thought structures at the world, you've stepped out of the thought structures and you're looking through consciousness. But it's not that you are looking through consciousness, you are the consciousness through which the perception takes place.

And if you can sense that, that there are two dimensions, the moment you become present, there are two dimensions. There is the dimension of form. Let's go back to the airport lounge to make it tangible.

There's the dimension of form, you're looking at bodies sitting on chairs, people and looking outside, planes, looking around. But there's another dimension there without which you wouldn't even see anything. And that is the key to living in presence is to become aware of that dimension that underlies whatever else happens externally.

And we could call that becoming aware of the background to all experience in yourself, which is not something that you can capture or see. What is that? Well, we could say that's becoming aware of attention itself, becoming aware of that you're aware.

In the background, the awareness knows itself as awareness. You can experience that as a stillness in the background. And in the foreground, there's the airport lounge.

You've gone through the portal, the magical portal into another dimension, far more significant than any distant galaxy that you could travel if you go through the Stargate. Because when you go through the Stargate and you end up in another galaxy, sounds very exciting, but you end up in the same state of consciousness that you went through the other end. So you will experience the same kind of thing as you did back home.

And you create the same kind of thing when you interact with whoever you find there. And you won't even see beings that inhabit a different quality of consciousness because of the difference in vibrational frequency. You bring your, with your old egoic consciousness, you go to the galaxies and you'll always find yourself.

No true transformation. So this Stargate is much more exciting because here you truly enter a different dimension. The only true different dimension is a different dimension of

consciousness.

So it's subtle, it's simple, it's subtle. It's not complex, what we're talking about. It's the opposite of complex.

This is not anything that you can work out mentally. I'm really trying to understand what he's talking about. Don't.

Because you can't, even I don't understand it. Because understanding in that sense means intellectually applying concepts to it, it's meaningless. That's not the dimension we are going.

There is the possibility of living in another dimension of at least being rooted in another dimension and then living in this dimension. Being rooted there and living here. Let's go back to the airport lounge where before there was a little unhappy self sitting and complaining.

And suddenly the unhappy self remembered the equation, what is equals is. And started to wake up to the simplicity, the unproblematic simplicity of the present moment. And an alertness arose.

And in that alertness, the now no longer unhappy self is no longer the self but has become deeper. The depth has opened up. And this person who on the surface may be a businessman or woman and carry a briefcase and look respectable has become more than just a one-dimensional being.

The depth has opened up because he or she has become aware that the essence of him or herself is awareness, is consciousness. And here I am, not I as my past or the person, I as the essence of I, the I is consciousness. Here I am and here is this external place that I see.

I see, I can also hear and be rooted in the background to this experience. I am the presence. Otherwise there would be no seeing and no hearing.

I'm the light behind the perception. There's a stillness, an alive stillness in the background. And so you've entered another dimension.

And so becoming alert to sense perceptions is one way of entering that dimension. The alertness arises and then you have whatever you perceive and the alertness in the background. You're then rooted in the alertness.

You are the alertness. You are the awareness. At this moment, there's listening.

Who or what is listening to these words? I am. Who is I?

Consciousness. And so these words come out of that and are received by that. And so

you can seek whenever you have nothing to do for a moment, see if you can enter that dimension, bringing attention to sense perceptions.

You arrive home, sit down for a moment and look around, bringing attention to nature. There may be a plant you can look at or a tree outside. Can make it even easier.

Can be easier if you look at something natural to enter that state than to look at a human being at first. You look at a flower or a tree and there's a flower, there's a tree and there's just pure perception for just a moment. Listening, looking, the two predominant senses, use them and then be aware of the two dimensions.

You can also listen to music. Certain types of music are more conducive to listening in presence. Music, for example, that is not emotional, that's easier than to listen in presence.

If music sounds like somebody who is going through emotional turmoil, then it stimulates your mind and your imagination. Italian opera. Ooh.

Ooh. With certain types of music, listen to the spaces between the sounds and immediately you're in touch with this dimension that we call awareness or presence. There's the sound and there's the space between the sounds.

For example, the shakuhachi flute, the Japanese flute.

[Speaker 10] (6:26:11 - 6:26:15)

Ooh. Ooh.

[Speaker 1] (6:26:20 - 6:26:35)

Ooh. You don't just listen to the sounds, you listen to the spaces. They're more important than the sounds.

I'd like to carry on doing that.

[Speaker 10] (6:26:35 - 6:26:35)

Right?

[Speaker 1] (6:26:45 - 7:02:14)

So. So it's a very wonderful way of, you know, this kind of thing. The shakuhachi, for example, used to be played by people in Zen monasteries.

Nowadays it's played by professional musicians and there's something not quite there anymore. The presence isn't there, it's played by professional musicians and the gaps get shorter because they think we can't have that long gaps, we have to make it more

interesting. And even if the music that you're listening to, even if it doesn't seem to have any spaces in between, there's sometimes maybe beautiful music but perhaps you can't actually detect any, the music is continuous sounds, weaving, then you need to be the space for it, you are the space for it and from that spaciousness you are the awareness for the sounds.

If the sounds have gaps, then that can be very helpful because what we call gaps simply enable you to be aware of awareness. First you're aware of a sound but when the sound subsides, I'll do it again, that's your opportunity to be aware of what remains when the form is gone, which is the formless consciousness. That's why this type of music is so helpful in awakening consciousness.

Awakening consciousness means consciousness becomes conscious of itself. So you can do the same with the bells, of course. You can follow the sound of the bells, here again we're using sound to enter the now.

Simple things. You can do it with birdsong. You can, whatever sounds arise naturally, you follow the sound with your attention.

Just give it your complete attention and at some point the sound dies. It ends. There's cessation.

And the practice has not finished when there's cessation. The practice becomes, fulfills itself when the sound dies and all that remains is a space of awareness. But nothing is filling it up.

So that's the opportunity of death, any form of death in your life, any form of loss, when any form leaves you, and the sound is an example of that, a cessation of form is the greatest opportunity and opening into that state of consciousness where you realize that the essence of who you are is formless consciousness itself. And so we can practice with a simple thing like listening to the sound of a flute or the sound of a piano. There are some classical pieces, piano pieces, beautiful ones, that have lots of short gaps in it.

And usually people just listen to the sounds. Next time you listen to a slow piano piece like that, be aware of the spaces, not just the sounds. And realize the power is in the space, because the power is consciousness.

And here we go with the bell, following attention, follow the sound with your attention. When the sound dies, what remains is just awareness. Another beautiful practice is to be aware that you are breathing.

Now, that's always there, so you can use it whether you are busy or not busy. You can always direct attention from time to time to the fact that you are breathing. Breath is a strange thing.

It has traditionally been associated, rightfully so, with spirit, the breath of God hovering over the waters of the deep, and then the breath of God, that's how it all starts according to the Bible, infusing everything with life. So breath and spirit are often regarded as almost synonymous, and the reason is that breath has no form as such, you can't see it and touch it, it's ethereal, formless almost. As I said in A New Earth, the European languages are Indo-Germanic, many words have their origin in Sanskrit, nobody knows how it happened, they must have been connected in distant past.

So the German word for breath, Atem, or to breathe, Atmen, is Atman in Sanskrit, which means the divine within, so that's where it comes from. So breath, directing your attention, simply being aware that you are breathing, what then happens is, even just one in-breath and one out-breath, feeling the whole length of the in-breath and the whole length of the out-breath. Now you cannot, breath isn't something like an external object where you say, there it is, I can see it, and you can't touch it, you can't see it, unless you breathe noisily you can't even hear it.

So easily breath becomes what really merges with awareness. Awareness of your breath is so subtle that all you're really aware of when you're aware of your breathing is you're aware of awareness. So breath is almost transparent as a form, it's a transparent form, so why breath for thousands of years has been used in meditation is because of its nature as form that is almost no form, it's almost transparent as form, therefore it is so helpful in awakening consciousness.

And so when you're aware of your breath, when you're really aware of awareness, and that's why it's such a powerful practice, don't do it in a natural way, you don't, even to say I'm now going to do a practice, wouldn't do it just naturally, it's always there and just remember from time to time to notice that you're breathing. And this looks like something insignificant, but it is highly significant because if you really notice that you're breathing, not like the mind does, the mind says, am I breathing? Yes, I'm breathing.

Notice means bring your attention to it, air moving in, just one conscious in and out breath and a different dimension is there in your life, just one conscious in and out breath, do that 20 times a day, two conscious in and out breath, even better, three, so your day, whenever you go to the bathroom, whenever you go in the elevator, rather than look at a person and say, should I say something or not, it's cold today, isn't it, because you feel uncomfortable with not saying anything, be comfortable with just being and breathe.

And not look forward to the end of the in-breath, it's a mental habit, always, already wanting to be at the end, be present as they say in meditation practice, be present at every step of the breath, you're just there at every step, in-breath, there's no thought when you're present with your breath, no thought, otherwise you can't be present. So it is extremely significant because really, as I said, I haven't actually put it in these words

before, when you are aware of your breath, what you're really aware of is your way of awareness. So that's the beauty of it, and what that means is you've entered the dimension of presence and this is, space has opened up in your life, space.

So in your daily life, use your breath, even just one is fine, just one, if you have to watch television occasionally, don't get drawn too much into the screen, look away sometimes because it's not that interesting, one conscious breath. And this takes you also to another portal which is to sense the aliveness of the inner body, which also is the beginning of formlessness. When you become aware that the body is alive within, which is another beautiful portal into now, into presence, because it takes attention away from thought activity, and you're beginning to sense the formless.

The energy of the body is not yet the formless as such, it's halfway between the world of physical forms and the unmanifested, as I call it. And the inner body, or the energy, the chi, is the bridge between the manifested world of forms and the formless, unmanifested, the source. So halfway there, there's that.

So going deeply into the body will also take you to just realize the realization that the entire body is simply a manifestation of consciousness, it's just consciousness becoming conscious of itself, the entire body becomes conscious of itself, every cell becomes conscious. It's a beautiful practice, directing attention into the body whenever you can in daily life, and this is a particularly good one when things around you become turbulent, other human beings, see if you can keep some attention in this inner energy field, or take a conscious breath, so that you remain rooted in presence, in the other dimension. And then either you do nothing, or whatever you do or say becomes charged with the energy that flows from there, which is very different.

Your words become charged with that power, or what you do becomes charged, or even if you just look at a person, there's an energy flow. There's not a me saying, I'm going to send you good energy now. It happens, it's a natural thing that happens.

So it's not so much that me as the doer, I'm now going to save the world. There's no self-identification with that. It's not my energy, there's no such thing.

So, sense perceptions, breathing, sounds, maybe music, choosing presence, remembering to choose presence, remembering to be one with the present moment, remembering the formula, what is equals is, in any situation. Let's talk for a moment about encountering situations that would usually be regarded as challenging, something happens. And there, that's another great opportunity for becoming present.

It's also an opportunity for becoming even more unconscious than the normal state of unconsciousness. And it's a challenge. Many people will become reactive in a challenge, upset, angry, complaining, fearful, and then all kinds of thoughts arise out of that, this shouldn't be, these judgments.

Or a challenge can, if you remember the is-ness, and then you look, and then suddenly a challenging situation brings increased consciousness, presence. First comes the realization, this is what is. You may remember from a new earth, in any situation, or in anything you do, you will be unconscious in what you do in any situation, unless there's one of the three modalities of doing, conscious doing, is there.

One is acceptance of what is. If you were driving, get stuck in the snow, or whatever, acceptance, not necessarily enjoyment because that's the next stage. To enjoy what you're doing, there's an outflow of energy.

If you can't enjoy what you're doing, can you accept that this is what I have to do, or this is what is? And again, peaceful energy is suddenly there when you respond to a challenge from the basis of acceptance, not the basis of rejection. So, completely different energy flows into what you do, and you activate forces outside yourself, when you bring acceptance to any situation, you activate forces outside yourself that will come in and exert a helpful, beneficial influence on the situation.

You can verify it in your own experience. I have innumerable accounts of people who told me that this is what they experienced. When this consciousness of non-resistance is brought to whatever you do, or wherever you are, the acceptance level, enjoyment and so on, is another possibility.

But let's just stay with acceptance. You may not be able to enjoy being stuck in the snow at night, and there you are, don't know what to do, where to go, but you're either in resistance, or you're in acceptance. If you're in acceptance, it is much more likely that something helpful will come in from the outside, into the situation.

Why? Because when you are in acceptance, you are open to life, which is the greater consciousness. You're not blocking yourself off.

Any negative emotion is a restriction, and is the closing of the door to the power of intelligence, or consciousness, whatever you want to call it, that which pervades the universe, that which is accessible to you, because you're not separate from it, you're it, suddenly any resistance, any negative thoughts or emotions close, and there's not much help that the universe can give, in the same way that the sun can't warm you when you run into a house and close all the shutters.

The sun is still there, it's not concerned, there's a continuous outpouring, it's continuously giving, but the little me says, oh no, close the shutters, okay, I've done, now I'm in control. So, the acceptance opens that, and you find many, if you then bring acceptance as your normal state, you will fluctuate between enjoyment and acceptance in any given situation. In some situations, enjoyment means there's an, ah, somewhat more dynamic, it's the same energy, but it goes from peace, just very restful peace of acceptance, to a somewhat more dynamic movement of enjoyment.

And then the third modality, as I call it, happens from time to time when there's intense creativity, for example, and that is, an intensity is added to the enjoyment, and that intensity we could call enthusiasm, whatever we call it, intense energy outflow. It could also happen in a limit situation when you're confronted with some danger and sudden action is required, there's a similar intensity, and the action doesn't come from fear, it comes spontaneous action out of presence, and there's a sudden enormous influx of energy and action happens. So, it's the creative energy of, so there's enjoyment, but a deepened enjoyment, an intensity of, any creative person has experienced that, and does experience that in the moment of creation, there's an intensity, which might even be misinterpreted as stress, but there's no stress whatsoever.

Stress means there's a little me trying this or that, or looking to the future, wanting something from the future more than you want to be in the present, then stress arises. And then that energy cannot be there, it doesn't operate. And so, you have it also in great performers, whose performance, whether it's dance, whether it is music, or singing, or whatever it may be, you have at the peak of their performance, they are, there is that intensity of energy suddenly moving through them.

And this is a quality then, that only there if you're absolutely present, if you're worried about whether your act is going to be good or not, it won't come, no matter how good you are technically. It's only if you're intensely, totally one with now, it comes, the intensity is suddenly there. So, an important gateway to the now is, important access to the gateway of now, is situations that usually you would regard as challenging, and there, allow those situations to be, to awaken you into total acceptance and intense presence.

So, wait for it, when it will come, sooner or later you'll find a little one or a bigger one, and see if you can immediately recognize that opportunity. If you don't recognize the opportunity and remember the magical formula, then you miss it and the situation will draw you into some unconscious reaction. And even there you can still wake up, even finding yourself in an unconscious reaction to your mind saying, how dreadful this is and what's going to happen, how awful situation, complaining, and even at that point you can still wake up and, oh, look at the mind, and be the awareness.

What is, is. Look at the fear. Whoa.

And at that moment, even that, the equation even here applies, you missed the first opportunity, you entered a state of fear, the first opportunity was complete acceptance of what is. You missed it. Second opportunity, there was a reaction.

And then you remember the formula, what is, is, and what is at that moment is a reaction, and the emotion that is part of the reaction. So, what can you do? The formula still applies.

What is, is. Fear. So, why not allow yourself to be in fear?

And miraculously you'll find fear becomes transformed. But it's not even that you want that. You just bring the space for it.

You have the space for that. So, the gateway of now, the now is entered through the acceptance of is at whatever level. So, it's never too late to accept what is.

It's too late. I should have accepted what is. I've missed my whole life.

I never accepted what is. What can I do now? Nothing.

So, that's the good thing is, it's not too late. It's never too late for is. So, presence flowing into your active life.

Presence flowing into when things seem to be making you a victim, as the mind might tell you, and they're realizing you're not a victim. When the complainer goes, you're not a victim. There's no victim.

So, presence flowing into activity. Conscious doing, so that always checking within yourself, am I in acceptance, enjoyment, or enthusiasm? You have to have a look inside at this moment, when any given moment, the moment, the now, okay, no, I'm not in acceptance, and I'm not enjoying it, and I'm not enthusiastic about this.

Okay, there's no, there's an absence of, there was an absence of consciousness, but the moment you notice it, the consciousness begins to bend. You see, I'm not accepting, I'm not enjoying myself, and I'm not enthusiastic, certainly not. There's suddenly a consciousness there, you're not trapped in the state anymore.

And then there's the possibility of saying, okay. And then, of course, you always begin with acceptance. You don't say in a difficult situation, I should be enthusiastic about being stuck out in the cold here.

No, you can't. Oh, it's great to be cold and having no food and water, and that's just not possible, perhaps. But accepting that there's the, when life does something to you, those are the situations.

When you are active, another type of situation. And when there's nothing much to do, then to invite presence in those moments. Not continuously, not, just make it, become familiar with inviting that into your life.

So here we have the true Stargate. Much better than, much better than, I still, I enjoy watching the other one, too, sometimes. But much better than the Stargate into another galaxy.

So the essence of all this, then, is knowing yourself as the, what we call the gateway of

now, is really the gateway to yourself. And so, living in that state of consciousness means simply to know yourself, not mentally, but experientially, continuously, as the space for what is, as the awareness, to be aware of awareness while things happen around. Then you're all, then you live in the now.

Whatever happens in the foreground, you are there as the space for it, and the space is consciousness, and the space is formless, and the space is timeless, and the space is who you are, beyond the temporary form of me. That's liberation. It's liberation from the illusion that you are the form.

And it's liberation from the illusion that the forms are threatening out there. And liberation from the illusion that some form out there is going to fulfill you. So it's liberation from illusion.

And it's so simple, you can go through life simply remembering, not as a memory, but as a continuous knowing, sensing yourself as consciousness. So you are the consciousness, and whatever else happens, happens. Then nothing really upsets you that much, and even if emotions come occasionally, they only, they don't touch the innermost depths of consciousness, they touch the surface layers.

Oh, there's happiness. Consciousness reminds. Happiness.

Unhappiness. It doesn't go very deep. Even happiness and unhappiness, just fluctuations.

In the background there's the continuous, that's consciousness. Never ceases. Where in the foreground things go.

Well, maybe one day I will give a musical concert involving both the didgeridoo and the shakuhachi flute. And maybe even, as they do in India, there's a type of vocal music that is the imitation of drums with a human voice. Thank you.

[Speaker 8] (7:02:14 - 7:03:43)

I am that guy that you described, that once taken over by my pain body, my friends and family say, who is that monster? And so I've been practicing, observing, and being the watcher, and that works well. Clearly my pain body cannot survive the life consciousness.

But, you know, it's afraid, because its existence is threatened, and it's figured out how to take me from relative presence to deep unconsciousness very rapidly on certain triggers. And so my question is really around that kind of rapid activation of the pain body. Are there any practices for dealing with that?

And once deeply unconscious, is it even possible to be the watcher, or is that what it

means to be deeply unconscious, the complete absence of consciousness? And I just need to wait until it feeds, and, you know, let it go dormant again.

[Speaker 1] (7:03:44 - 7:12:49)

Thanks. Now, the main form that your pain body takes, I assume, is anger. Yes.

Because that's the one form the pain body can take that is the quickest, that comes so rapidly in some people that you can't catch it. But you also mentioned that there are certain situations that tend to trigger your pain body. So one thing you can do is when you are in such a situation where you already know from past experience that your pain body may get triggered in that situation, you can be more than usually alert, highly alert, to see, regard it as an experiment, to see if you can catch it.

It could also be a certain conversation going in a certain direction, in a direction that you know, for example, is going to trigger the pain body. And once it's going, okay, bring up, feel, be in the body, to use the inner body awareness as an anchor so that you can hold on to presence. So be fully there and then see if you can catch it.

If you are prepared, you are more likely to catch it. That's one thing you can do. So when you know those familiar situations, I don't know what it is in your case, it could be visiting certain people or having a talk or certain topics that you are discussing with somebody or your partner that tend to bring it up, so that you can, whatever it is, you can probably even write, just write down what the usual situations are, the most likely situations are.

And sometimes, as I said, you can see events leading up to it before, because you know it from experience, with the conversation, for example, with your partner or whoever is going in a certain direction. And you say, oh, this is where we are going. And so then you can be doubly present.

You have to just be, not suppress it, not, I mustn't have a pain-body attack, no, but to be there as a watcher, just, pain-body doesn't like the intense light of consciousness on it. Pain-body being, of course, an accumulation of old emotion that is almost an entity that lives in you. Another thing you can do is, after a pain-body attack, because, just before I go on, in the middle of it, as you suggest, if it's very strong, there's perhaps nothing much you can do.

If you're totally in the grip of it, you are it, and so you won't even know that anything else is possible. But as presence grows in you, one day you may find, whenever it still happens, one day you may find, to your astonishment, that even in the middle of a pain-body, there's suddenly in the background, there's a little light of awareness from where you're observing what's happening to you. It doesn't necessarily mean immediately the pain-body attack will come to an end, but there may be a witness in the background, oh,

oh, that kind of witness, oh, oh, there it is.

It may be at first very, very much in the background, and then gradually more. It's an amazing thing when one wakes up in the middle of a pain-body attack. It can happen.

If it doesn't happen yet, that's fine too. There are other ways. Another one being, after it has happened, you could, just as a structured practice, not necessarily immediately after, perhaps the next day, you can, usually I don't recommend going into the past or anything like that, but in this particular case, you could try to replay the events just leading up to your loss of consciousness.

Just replay it in your mind, and then you might experience a mild form in a pseudo kind of pain-body attack. It's not the real thing because the pain-body knows, but you may get just a resonance or an echo of what you actually did experience on that occasion. And there it will be easier to stay present.

So you replay it in your mind, not compulsively, only you sit down and say, okay, I'm going to do this for five minutes now, and then you're done with it. Don't replay it in your mind for the next few days. So that's a little bit like you get a, you know what they do when you get a vaccine.

You get the same virus, but in a weakened form. So that's a little bit like that. So if presence is the immunity, then presence builds up more easily like that.

That's another thing then you can do. And if you are close to certain people who have enough understanding of this process of consciousness and unconsciousness and of the pain-body, you may ask, one thing you can do is to have a little game, which is play acting. For example, with your partner or friend, whoever it is, say, why don't you play the game that you talk about this and accuse me of having done this or that, and then, but don't tell me beforehand.

Say, do it when I'm not expecting it. Because if he tells you, okay, let's do it now, then nothing is going to happen because you know full well. But if it comes unexpectedly, and then in that moment he raises a flag or something and says, ah, this is, it's a rehearsal.

This is, that could be interesting to see what happens then, whether the pain-body is, the pain-body will be there probably, but what happens to it when the pain-body sees that it wasn't a genuine situation? It may deny that it wasn't a genuine situation because pain-bodies are very clever. It will shout, say, I don't want anything to do with, this is, the pain-body wants it to be real.

But you'll have to see, experiment a little bit. So, and then the, you could get, I'm not, that's a little joke, you could get an actor to play into your life, pay him or her to come in twice a week to ring your doorbell and say something to do that you know is going to trigger your pain-body. So there are various things then you can do.

Another interesting question is how long does the pain-body attack last? You have to observe that in yourself. And it is, as presence grows, you may find that the time, it lasts, the time span, the life span of the pain-body shortens.

So instead of being around for an hour or whatever, or even more in some, it could be several hours, you may find you go through it much more quickly, but I don't want to put anything, any suggestions into your mind. You have to just observe to see how long it tends to last. At the moment, I'd like to ask you, what's the average life span of a pain-body attack until you regain consciousness?

How long?

[Speaker 8] (7:12:50 - 7:12:57)

Yeah, for this kind of activation, it's severe, I have to... Can you say that again?

[Speaker 10] (7:12:57 - 7:12:57)

Okay.

[Speaker 8] (7:12:57 - 7:13:06)

Sorry. Yes, for this kind of activation that's severe, I have to go to sleep and wake up the next morning, that's the only place it subsides.

[Speaker 1] (7:13:06 - 7:18:23)

Yes, so even if it happens in the morning, then it would be there throughout the day, yes. And of course, it colors, as you well know, it colors all your subsequent, because you will experience the rest of the day through the emotional pain-body. Also, as you know, your mind activity, while you're in the grip of the pain-body, is the pain-body speaking through your mind, so it takes possession of your mind, all your thought activity is a reflection of the emotion of the pain-body.

So what your mind is telling you, or what your mind is telling other people, or the way in which your mind is judging certain situations that you're in, they're all totally distorted by the pain-body. It's an amazing phenomenon. So I recommend, then, continued vigilance and a little bit of experimentation, a playful approach, although the thing the pain-body likes the least is not to be taken seriously.

And so that's precisely why you shouldn't take it that seriously, because the pain-body is serious. So spending as much time as you can in inner body awareness helps, even while you're free of the pain-body, because then the more presence you get into the cells of your body, the harder it is for the pain-body to take you over. And so when all is well, you grow in presence power, and then it will be much easier to be there when it happens.

So the general tendency is like this. First, you will tend to observe a shortening of the pain-body's lifespan. So from a whole day, it may come to a couple of hours, one hour, half an hour.

That's one thing that tends to happen. Regaining consciousness, at what point consciousness comes back. You may find it comes back after you've had a good night's sleep.

You may find it comes back as the energy of the pain-body weakens gradually. You may find consciousness coming in sooner, even while it's still a little bit of it, the remnants of it are still there, and consciousness comes in already. Ah, there it is.

And then even sooner after a while, until you reach the point that I mentioned before, that when there's enough presence in you, in the middle of it, the witness may be there. Or the witness is there even as it happens, and at the same time you know it's happening, and then the pain-body can't survive for that long. It's a good motivation for presence.

The pain-body has its place. And don't beat yourself up afterwards, and just accept it's nothing personal. It's just the human pain-body.

And presence grows, so it becomes fuel for consciousness, really. I had a very heavy pain-body. My pain-body wasn't anger.

It was, well, sadness, depression, unhappiness, heaviness, poor me, that kind of thing. And it lingered sometimes for days at a time with associated thoughts in my head that started in childhood. Whenever something happened that wasn't good, one of the habitual thoughts I had as a child up to the age of, well, probably into my twenties, and I already had that thought when I was eight, bad things always happened to me.

Always bad things happened to me. And so whenever something went wrong, the thought came, oh, of course, always me. It's always bad.

It's always. I didn't know I had that thought, because I was that thought. I totally believed in it.

Well, I wish you success, and next time we meet, you can give us a progress report.

[Speaker 8] (7:18:24 - 7:18:25)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (7:18:25 - 7:18:25)

Thanks. Yes?

[Speaker 2] (7:18:44 - 7:20:53)

The secret of dropping into this moment is really allowing this moment to be as it is, as Eckhart would say. And in the words of this person sitting here, it's really resist nothing. Resist absolutely nothing.

So whatever arises, you surrender to. Even if there's resistance, you surrender to the resistance, allowing it to be here fully and completely. And what does that mean?

What does that look like? That means, say, for example, if the pain body comes up, surrendering, accepting it, resisting nothing of what arises physically, mentally. But what it means is that you accept it so much so that you are willing to feel it and be with it forever.

Because the moment that you have even the slightest bit of I want it to go away, you're not allowing it to be as it is. You're not accepting it. That slightest bit.

And we all know that when that slightest bit comes, it's like, oh, no. Oh, I want it to be different. No, I want it to change.

Oh, no, please. OK, I'll accept it. I'll accept it.

I'll accept it.

[Speaker 10] (7:20:53 - 7:20:55)

But oh, no.

[Speaker 2] (7:20:59 - 8:14:38)

It's letting go of time completely, of future, of past, and fully being here in this moment just as it is. Pain body and all. Or even physical pain.

Or even emotional. Any emotion. Sadness.

Grief. Anger. Doesn't matter.

Just allowing it to be. Being the space. Because you are that space.

But the moment that you begin to resist what arises in that space, we've become identified with that form of whatever is arising. So by allowing it to be as it is, it's like we separate ourselves from the form, realizing that this space in which the form arises, this space is who we are. And all we are is that witness to what arises.

But of course, it's more than just witnessing, because we are feeling human beings. We have to feel what arises. And feel it completely.

Non-resistant to the present moment. Demanding nothing. Accepting everything.

Just as it is. And the moment that you accept it, it's like the space opens up. And you can sense into that stillness.

The stillness of who you really are. And realize, ah, okay. This is pretty cool.

I am this space. And all this, the form, the play of consciousness, is really nothing at all. It's not that important.

What's important is that we are this space. That recognition of that space. Then we don't lose consciousness.

In other words, become unconscious. Identified with whatever is arising. Thought, emotion, opinion, judgment.

And believing that that is real. The Course in Miracles, their introduction, where it says, Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists.

Herein lies the peace of God. So it's not about getting rid of what's out here, what's playing. It's about sensing into and realizing that you are the space in which the play happens.

And then when that happens, it's like you recognize, it's like the two become one. And not forgetting that you are the space, even though the play is all dancing around. There's ups and downs.

All forms being impermanent. And recognizing the impermanence of form. And then nothing becomes a real problem.

It doesn't mean that you won't ever feel emotions. You will. And that's all part of it.

Part of the play. But there isn't that resistance to the emotion. And here in the West, it's strongly ingrained in us that emotions are somehow not so good.

And Eckhart and I will kind of quite often joke, because I'm this Asian woman. Lots of emotion, fire, you know. And when you hear Chinese people talk and they're speaking in their native language, it looks like they're yelling at each other.

I mean, seriously, it does. It looks like they're yelling at each other. And Eckhart would say, well, actually, you know what they're saying?

They're saying, I love you. I love you. I love you.

And you know, but here, you know, we're more conservative, more, you know. So it's actually quite interesting, because I was born in Canada. In this Asian body with the Asian cultural ancestry.

And even though I was born in Canada, I could still feel very, very much Asian and Chinese in the way that I just interact. And it's interesting, because when I was younger, I felt like, because in Vancouver, where I grew up, I think at that time, there were only maybe like three Chinese families at our school. So I was one of those kids who went through a lot of suffering and was teased a lot.

Get teased even walking home from school and such. To the point where I just said, I don't want to be Chinese anymore. And I stopped talking Chinese.

I just stopped. I didn't want to do it. And none of us kids, I come from a family of four siblings.

And it's interesting, but all of us went through the same thing. We all decided at a very young age to stop. And it's like, wow, you know, now that I'm older and, you know, it's like, wow, I can't even, you know, I can't even speak to my mother.

My mother was born in China, and she was, and she speaks Chinese. In fact, she speaks very little English. That's how come we got along so well when growing up.

We couldn't talk to each other. We couldn't fight. We couldn't understand each other.

But what I'm pointing to is that all of us, no matter where we have come from, we have somehow come to this point where all of us, for some reason or another, decided that we can't really be. I mean, yes, it may be some part of cultural conditioning and the way that, you know, expressions come out. But we've all learned to somehow kind of hide ourselves.

And we've all reaching that point where it's like, I can't hide myself any longer. Now, I don't mean the self as in the egoic sense of self, but I mean our true self, the true identity of who we really are, which is really no identity at all, no identification with who we think we are. Because we are not any thought.

I am not Chinese. Even though quite often many people may look, and this is what happens, is that we begin to place labels. We become so identified with the thought process, with words, labels, that we actually can't see past them.

Which, the first lesson in the Course in Miracles is being able to look around the room, or look wherever you are outside your window, and you look at things and you say, This table does not mean anything. This room does not mean anything. And see how we label things and begin to view our perception through this filter of labels, of judgments, of ideas, opinions, whatever they are.

And that's how we see it. So when I was younger and being teased, that's all that people could see. And we even do this probably daily, especially if you've been married for a long time.

You may come to your partner and you're viewing them through all the experiences that you've had with your partner. All maybe the hurts, all the ups and downs. And you no longer see the being that he or she is.

And we do this all the time, and it's beginning then to recognize when we do that. Can we let it go? Can we just drop the veil?

Drop all thoughts. I mean, thoughts are useful. They bring in a form of communication.

But that's all it is. It's a pointer. Can we let go of every thought and see that it's not real?

No thought can possibly be real. The only reason why you can understand me is because we have agreed that certain sounds make up a meaning. See how we give it meaning?

If you were in another country, you wouldn't understand at all. One of the best talks that I have been to with Eckhart was in Germany. The very first time we went to Germany.

And he didn't think he could do a talk in German. Although he spoke Deutsch. He didn't think he could use words like consciousness and all that sort of stuff in German.

So they had a translator to translate. And he did one talk, but it really felt like it just wasn't working. Translation wasn't working.

Because you know when Eckhart gets on a roll, he can get on a roll and it's hard to stop. When he stops, it's like the flow stops. The energy stops.

So the second talk, which would have been a three hour talk, he says, I have to do it in English. I think enough German people understand English and I'm just going to have to do it in English. I can't have the translation.

So anyway, so he started the talk off speaking German. Just to tell them that he was going to do the talk in English. There was not going to be any translation.

So anyways, 20 minutes into the talk, he realized, I'm still talking German. So I'm going to continue speaking German until, you know, I just can't do it anymore. He did a three hour talk in German.

And at first I was like, oh boy, I'm disappointed. You know, like I can't understand anything. But then there's that surrender that happened and all I can do is just be still.

And I realized, I thought, oh my gosh, how often I've sat there listening to him. Listening to the words when really I just needed to listen and be in that stillness. Listen to the space, the silence between the words.

It's just like in music. Music is half sound and half silence. And that's what makes it so great is that stillness.

Well, that was the best talk I had ever been to. Really, sincerely, just feeling that stillness. I walked out of there so high.

It was just like, wow, okay, you can speak any language you want. You know, it doesn't matter. And we do this even in our everyday lives.

We will put more of our attention, in fact, 100% of our attention on words. On what the other person is saying or what is externally happening outside. Or even in our thinking.

It doesn't even have to be coming out as the words. We can be thinking it. 100% of our attention goes outward.

When really, if we could just take a breath and tap into that source of who we are, the stillness, which is always right there. And that was the great discovery for me in that talk was that, wow, that stillness, it's always here. But my attention with the form of this moment, how much attention I give to the form is what covers that stillness up.

So can we then practice keeping some of our attention on that still, small place within as we go about our daily lives. And trust that if there's really anything important that's happening out there, you'll end up giving more attention to it. But really, most of it, probably, I don't know, 97% of it.

I've heard that 97% of all humans are dysfunctional. So I guess it must be 97% of everything out there must be pretty well dysfunctional. So why give it all of our attention and place our importance out there and forget about who we are in here.

And that this is the most important, that vital connection, that communion with the divine essence of who we are. And then when that connection happens, then perhaps the outer world begins to change. Because we have changed.

And I don't mean changed in the sense of stillness change, but that who we think we are dissolves into the nothingness, the nothingness of who we are. Then absolute stillness remains. And then our perception of the world shifts, changes.

And when we begin to look out there or hear and listen to what is out there, we also begin to perceive and listen to the space, to see the space. So we begin to see through what we've given meaning to, what we've labeled. So it's like seeing through the person.

You're saying, I feel like he sees right through me. He's seen beyond the person. So then we begin to play in this world, yes, in this form, yes, with our cultural conditioning, which is fine.

It's not a problem. It only becomes a problem when you become truly identified with it and you believe that it's true about yourself or true about the other person. And then the beauty of the uniqueness of the form shines through.

So we have all different colors popping up, just like the flowers and the human beings. And you go, wow, isn't that beautiful? Instead of, well, that's different.

I'm not so sure, so I'm a little frightened about that. But we begin to interact, seeing past the meaning and into the light. Of consciousness, of who we are.

I am no different than you are, and you are no different than I am at the deepest level. Only in the world of form are we different. And that's what is so beautiful as well.

If we didn't have any mirrors to see ourselves in, we wouldn't be able to see our own face. But what I see is your face, and I would think that you are me. So resist nothing.

Feel everything, completely. Demanding nothing to be different than what is here now. Because quite often, it's really not so bad out there.

It's more in here that makes it bad. Nothing is neither good or bad, but thinking makes it so. So wherever and whatever you are feeling in this moment, you feel.

You fully accept. And we'll do a little meditation of resist nothing. The new CD that's out by Sounds True, and it's called Resist Nothing.

And on that are several different meditations just to assist you, help you, just to be present with whatever is that's going on for you in your life situation. And we all have something going on, sometime or another. And what's interesting is that after I did this CD, my life has been pretty, you know, kind of even.

Not much up, not much down, you know. There's some like this. And it's easy to kind of be with something that goes like this.

Isn't it? It's quite easy. Oh, I could ride this wave.

It's quite easy. And then suddenly, it was just like right after the CD, it was just like something just peaked. And it's like, whoa, my roller coaster went right up.

And it's like, wow, okay, all right, I can do this. But it gave me another appreciation that, wow, when the roller coaster is really high, so when things, something that happens in your life to bring up, to intensify that emotion or intensify whatever is going on that brings about some emotions, to really have to be with that, I began to appreciate again just how challenging it can be just to be present with something that is so intense and not expect it to dissolve so quickly.

So if you listen to that CD, there's this thing where I say, and it can still happen. Believe me, it still can because I have done this. Oftentimes, if emotion is felt fully and completely, it can dissolve in 30 seconds.

And it was pretty good. I was getting pretty good at that until that something happened

where I had to really begin to say, okay, wow, wow, okay, this is not taking 30 seconds. I've got to be with this more and longer for whatever reason.

And without going into the head about it, about why is this not changing, because as soon as I did that, realizing that, wow, okay, no, I have to listen to my own teaching and accept this moment fully, like as if I were going to experience this for eternity. And that's the moment that it begins to dissolve or change in that full acceptance. So when you do that, something arises, step back just for a moment, close your eyes if you wish, and just drop into whatever it is that you feel in this moment.

You can try it now, just observing, feeling what it is that you are feeling. Take a breath into your body, into the sensations. Become aware of your breathing.

Become aware of the sensations. Just notice how you are feeling. And perhaps a label comes up of what you're feeling.

Agitation, sadness, happiness. The label isn't so important. So once the label arises, you just let that go and just feel.

Resisting nothing. Notice how you're holding your body. Are you holding?

Can you relax? If thoughts arise, just notice and let them go. Don't give any meaning to what is arising, to what is in you.

But simply feel. What does this emotion feel like? Be with the sensation of the emotion.

Be with the sensation of this moment. Judge nothing. Labeling nothing.

Giving meaning to nothing. So no meaning to anything. Simply be.

Experience this moment. And once you feel, experience what it is that you are feeling, sense into that space the stillness in which the sensations arise, in which the thoughts arise. Just watching, feeling.

There's nothing to do, nothing to get. But simply be. Resisting nothing.

And if you notice that there's resistance there, then you be with that. Dropping the label of resistance and feel the sensation. What does resistance feel like?

What does it do to my body? Brings tension and contraction. Can I even be with that tension and contraction?

And the moment that's fully accepted, something in you shifts. For all forms are impermanent. Breathing.

Neither running to or running away from what is. But simply be with what is. Any movement towards it, any movement away from it is resistance.

Can you feel that space? Can you feel that emotion? That sensation?

The two are really inseparable. But only one is real. If you're wondering how long this meditation is going to go on for, you're in your thinking mind.

If you're wondering how long you're going to feel this sensation or feel an emotion, you're in your thinking mind. To be fully present in this moment requires the acceptance of whatever it is that shows up for you in this moment. Neither past or future are real.

What's real? And tapping into that stillness, staying with that stillness, when you're ready, you can gently open your eyes, yet keeping some attention inward. And with that attention inward, and yet the outer form exists, is the true union, the true marriage, where the two become one.

So the marriage is not out there between people. It's between you as the form, and God as that inner stillness within. That's the true marriage.

That's the true merging. So then we move about the world as this one singular movement. We have form and we have the stillness together in this world.

And then we can dance this way, and the dance is much more fluid, flowing. And still we bring stillness then into this world. Rather than the separation, the separation is forgetting about the stillness, and no longer exists, and all you are is this thinking entity of body and mind, instead of the trinity of bringing in that stillness.

So then we live in this world, and not be of this world. Imagine Christ on the cross, and the world is the horizontal plane, and yet the connection is the divine essence of who you are, is the vertical dimension of that cross. And here you are in this world.

We're hidden there, all right? We can't go anywhere. I mean, we're in this body.

The temple, the church, is your body. And we are the body of Christ, Christ consciousness. The divine consciousness.

So our connection still is that, is here, vertically, and yet we are in this world. Yes, pinned there on the cross. Can't go anywhere.

No way out. Absolutely no way out. But then is there a way out?

And that is through the dimension of Christ consciousness. Of your connection, your marriage, your communion, with the stillness within you. God is not outside, but God is within.

It's the only place. So it doesn't matter about these temples and churches. Yes, they're beautiful, and yes, there could be a space, which that's all it is, is a space to go, so where you can go and commune.

But really, that space, if all those churches and temples were just blown to bits, all you have is yourself, which you are the temple. You are the body of Christ, and we embody Christ. Or we're going to embody the ego.

You cannot have both. You cannot serve two gods. God the Father, or the God of the world.

Can't have it both ways. We think we can for a while, but it only leads to suffering. And all paths, whether you do the path of suffering, the path of devotion, the path of knowledge, all lead to the divine essence of who we are.

And we'll see what happens. Will it be boring? I doubt it.

Only when you get bored is when you know that you're in the mind. We need to get to that place where there's this little sort of, I don't know if you call it a joke, but I've said this before, I've used this before, was that there's this famous English writer who was at a cocktail party. And somebody came up to him and said, Are you enjoying yourself here?

And the famous English writer says, It's the only thing that I'm enjoying here. So, are you enjoying yourself here? I don't hear anything.

Oh no. It's the only thing that you should be enjoying here. And that's yourself.

The true joy comes from within. Anything that makes you happy or laugh that's outside you, it's temporary. But what can bubble inside you continuously comes from within.

Even in the midst of sadness or grief or loss of a loved one, there can be peace. You can feel that sadness yet feel peace. And when your commitment is to this divine essence of who you are, then you use every single opportunity as a spiritual awakening, as a deepening.

I'm faced with that this moment, these days, with probably two potential beings that I love so dearly, whose lifespan in their bodies will soon be coming to an end. And that's my father, who's 88 years old. And he's ready.

He says, I'm ready. I'm ready to go. And our beloved Maya, who has a heart condition, and we know that she will sooner or later leave body.

And using this opportunity as a deepening spiritually, contemplating death, as we all have to sooner or later contemplate our own deaths, and feeling the beauty and the essence, being with that essence. And really the form passes away, but who we are at the core is eternal. We are eternity.

Oh, I have to tell you guys this. We drove from Vancouver to here, and we were like stopped overnight in Red Bluff. And we went to a restaurant to have dinner.

And somehow we got to talking about Eckhart's father, who left body I think about five years ago. And Eckhart said, he mentioned about his father's ego. Because he had, even though he was very spiritual in a sense, he still had this big ego at times.

And when he said that, the glass of water that was full of water and ice, burst. It literally just, poof, burst. And we went, okay.

We kind of forgot about what we were talking about. We wondered, wow, what was that? We didn't even touch it.

And everyone was coming over that worked there, and they were like, oh yeah, if you put it down maybe too hard. And we go, we didn't touch it. It was nothing.

We didn't do anything. It just burst. And then I said, what were we talking about just before that happened?

And we realized we were talking about his father and his ego. So he didn't like that. So he may have left body, but he was definitely with us.

And the experience of just feeling that energy, because it's energy. It's like water. You boil water, yet all it does is change form.

So the essence of who we are is of the one life, is eternal, is stillness with no limitations, no borders, nothing. The space. So if you can imagine this universe, this space, we are at that space.

And we would not recognize who we are as space consciousness if we were not in form. And we wouldn't know that space existed if there was no forms. What name could we give it?

There'd be no even dimension to it. So we are awakening consciousness through the form. We're recognizing ourselves.

But from the moment we are born, we are taught to forget about ourselves and begin to identify with our name. Oh, they keep calling me Johnny or Alice. Oh, and they're looking at me.

That must be me. Because they say I'm supposed to call them Mommy and Daddy. That's who they are, is Mommy and Daddy.

No, it's not. So we're coming back home to recognize and be in that space. And that's the flowering.

That's the purpose of our life. And there's no other purpose. And I still have to even remind myself about that.

There's no other purpose but just to recognize that space. There's nothing for me to do. Sometimes I still wonder what I'm going to do when I grow up.

Honestly. I'm just like, well, what am I supposed to do? Wow, I've got, you know, because contemplating now with my father being ill and with Maya being ill, it's like this contemplation.

Jeez, I've only got so many maybe years or minutes left on this planet in this form. What do I want to do? And then it's like, come on.

Just be. Just be. Just be still and move from there.

And whatever it is that I'm supposed to be doing, it's only in this moment that I'm doing it. So what's the quality that you will bring to this moment? Am I going to infuse this moment and what I'm doing in this moment in my thinking mind?

Or am I going to create and infuse whatever I'm doing with presence? With just finding that inner stillness in this moment with whatever it is I am doing. That's our work.

That's our realization. That's our creation is in this moment now. Not what I'm going to do in the future, but how am I bringing this moment into creation?

Stillness or with thinking about it?

[Speaker 1] (8:16:05 - 9:00:15)

As we sit in stillness, you need to be alert so that the stillness is not just out in the room, but also within. Alertness is a frequency. It has no tension in it.

One could call it relaxed alertness. But there is an intensity to it. And that's really what the teaching is.

The essence of the spiritual teaching is to demonstrate, to share energetically the intensity of that state of consciousness that is arising. Often or usually when one speaks of intensity, one associates that with stress, almost anxiety. You must get this done.

People who are doing their work, putting out a lot of energy, stressful energy, contracted. And then that's usually when one speaks of intensity, one has that association. That's the old consciousness, which may occasionally still, of course, arise in you, because many people that you work with or live with are still living in that consciousness and manifesting it.

But here there's an intensity that is peaceful and relaxed. And again, when we speak of relaxed in the old consciousness, what you associate with relaxation is becoming a little bit sleepy. I can let go now.

I've done the day's work and can hang out, veg out. And as the term implies, you're falling below thinking towards the vegetative realm. And that's fine.

But this is not what this is about. So there could be various misconceptions. One is a misunderstanding of intensity, of intense alertness, and also a misunderstanding of relaxed.

Relaxed meaning free of tension or stress. Now, if you are possessed by the ordinary, normal, unawakened consciousness, then all you can think of when one speaks of relaxation or intensity is either stress or sleep. And peace usually implies, from the point of view of the old consciousness, a certain decrease in one's sense of aliveness.

You feel peaceful. Some people feel peaceful only when they get very tired. And of course, yes, it is very peaceful to go to sleep.

It's a beautiful thing. If you can catch what we call tiredness, this is, of course, not where we are going. I'm just explaining the other direction.

What we call tiredness is a pull. Usually we think we know what we talk about when we say tired. Even there, you could bring in some awareness and stay aware when you're tired.

And if you bring some awareness into your tiredness, I'm diverging slightly now. Don't worry. If you bring some attention into when you're feeling really tired and then feel what it feels like, then you will notice a pull.

Something is pulling you. And what is pulling you? It would conventionally be called sleep.

But that pull has a sweetness to it. It is so sweet and wonderful that when it becomes very strong, you would rather go there than survive if you have a choice. People get lost in the wilderness, can't find their way home, get cold.

And they know when they lie down they're not going to wake up again. And yet, at some point, they become so tired, but the pull towards that sweetness is so strong that it's so beautiful to let go. And then they go there.

And that is the realm, of course, when in deep sleep you go to the unmanifested, the source, but you don't know it. You join with the source. In deep sleep, you merge with the source.

And then when you emerge back from deep sleep, you have a vague memory of, oh, that was good. Well, you don't remember. I'm not talking about dreams, but the dreamless state of sleep.

So the pull of the formless is there, too, and that pulls you below thinking. And it's

beautiful. And so this is not the way we go.

We go to the formless by transcending thinking. And there also you encounter, at first it's so subtle you may hardly notice it. At first, all you notice when you transcend thinking is a spaciousness.

But within that spaciousness, there's also very subtle joy at first, and it can become very intense as you become attuned to it. So alertness without tension. I'm demonstrating now without words, which is not easy.

Energetically, yes. And what is that alertness without tension? It's to have an analogy.

If you had just landed on this planet as an ET, and nothing that you see you can name because it's all alien to you, how would you be? You would go, oh. You would just be a spacious awareness.

You have no words to describe things. That's a relaxed alertness, which sometimes comes to people naturally when they use the expression, wow, wow. Two seconds, three seconds of no thought.

You don't know what to say or think. Wow. Now, for most people who enter that state, many people still enter that state only occasionally and accidentally of alert, absolutely alert, intense presence because life forces them into it.

As you know, dangerous activities may do it. They stop your mind, and you feel so alive that you want to go back to your dangerous activity again and again, get almost addicted to whatever it is, motor racing. Ooh.

No thought, just intense aliveness. And when the car stops, then go, ooh. You're back in time.

You were in the timeless. Serious illness can do it, too. It wakes you up.

You suddenly become acutely aware how short-lived this form is, and you step out of time. And sometimes people say, I really began to appreciate the present moment, but really it means I stepped out of time. And sometimes when they get healed, it stays with them, which means the illness, the serious illness, brought about a shift in consciousness.

It can happen, but I wouldn't wait for that. If you choose presence now because you realize strongly that that is what wants to realize itself through you, then it's less likely that life will force you, have to force you into presence. So you can either voluntarily walk into paradise or be dragged into it screaming, no.

So when we sit in stillness, when you sit either alone or we sit together as now here in stillness, as long as there is a certain intensity, thought is kept at bay. It happens maybe

just fragments or not at all. And there's no effort involved or willpower.

Presence is not willpower. It's not willpower that says no thought. It just can't happen in intense presence.

And the moment you can actually experiment in yourself with when the level of intensity goes down a little bit, more thoughts start coming in. Interesting. And when it goes down even further, more, more, until there's only thought.

That means you're completely a person again, just a person. So now you cannot be a non-person for the rest of your life in this world. You have to, as I've said several times, you have to be both the presence and a person in one.

So carry that state of presence with you so that thought, not the absolute intensity perhaps that we have here. It's beautiful here as we sit in presence and experience. It can be so intense that no thought arises at all.

And you should choose that at home or wherever you are in nature, as much as you can, choose to enter the state of intense presence when you know there's nothing right now that you need to deal with. Don't believe your mind that says, no, no, first you have to think about all these problems and make another five phone calls. No, do it.

A little bit of length of time doesn't matter. Choose intense presence. Then some of that stays with you when you go back into everyday life and the mind needs to work again.

And then thoughts become interspersed with presence. There are thoughts here, let's say here are five thoughts, but in between the thoughts, presence is seeping through, which means even as you speak to people, speak with people of this or that or look for where to go, there is a peace that you carry inside. And that peace is another word for the stillness or the presence that seeps through thoughts.

So that otherwise you have just a wall of thought. Nothing can't get through. Presence wants to get through, but it can't.

So it's pushing from because it's the evolutionary impulse of the universe. Presence is pushing here, see, but it can't get through. There's too many thoughts, one thought after another after another.

It's just a stream of continuous. And there's something that wants to manifest through you. Now what happens when pressure like that builds up eventually?

Something happens. Oh! That was the ego, by the way.

The wall of thought activity, unawareness of anything else is ego, and something that wants to come into this dimension through this form can't get through, but pressure is building up. What happens then? Suddenly something cracks in the ego, the wall of

continuous thought.

That's painful to the ego. And that whatever that is, it can be many things. It can be a psychological malfunction.

It can be a physical malfunction. It can be some drastic thing happens. Something goes drastically wrong in your life, a breakdown, whatever it is, mental, physical, some absolute disorientation and confusion, whatever.

But you didn't make room for life. You didn't make room for what really matters, what wants to manifest through you. And so if an entire civilization does that, let's say a country, or countries are not really separate anymore these days, there's just the civilization.

And if the vast majority of people live trapped in the egoic state, then what tends to happen is it attracts disaster to itself because in the absence of that, when that is denied, that which wants to evolve really is a denial of life itself. And then disaster happens. And then that's what has its place.

And then it happens that way. So it's highly recommended that you cooperate, align yourself with the evolutionary impulse. It makes life not only easier, but also more empowered because when you let it through, ultimately we're talking about the essence of who you are.

When you let it through, it can begin to operate in your life and be in relationships, in what you do, even influence the way in which you think so that thinking is no longer dysfunctional as it is when thinking is all there is. When thinking becomes dysfunctional and becomes an enemy really, you create your own enemy, and it's your mind. So then thinking can become fruitful too when the alignment, the opening is there.

But it may well be that at first you don't notice much change and the mind says, why am I doing this? It doesn't make sense. What's the point in being still?

How is that solving your problems, says the mind? Haven't you got things to worry about that are really more important than stillness, at least right now? Maybe when I've solved my problems, then I can relax and then I can investigate all that.

But in the meantime, I've got too much on my mind. Some people say on my mind or they say on my plate, but that really means on my mind. On my plate means outside.

And of course, everybody has too much on their mind when there's no awareness. And you cannot wait for the end of your problems before you can be present or for the situation to be more helpful. It has to be done wherever you are, which is now, that opening.

So when we practice here or you practice on your own, then we invite that state of intense presence as we do here now and become familiar with it. And then what builds up, so to speak, is presence power in your life. The more you enter that state, it doesn't matter for how long, just a few minutes, several times a day.

Some people might call it meditation, but it's more like meditation is usually associated in one's mind with some technique. And any meditation technique really is designed to take you into presence. It's not the technique, it's not the meditation.

Unless it's a meditation that has virtually no technique, as they sometimes do in Zen, where they say they don't even use the word meditation, they say sitting. And so when the Zen person asks you, he doesn't ask you, how long have you been meditating? He says, how long have you been sitting?

20 years. 20 years I have been sitting. Oh, and you still have that big ego?

Of course, if you identify with a conceptual self that has been sitting for 20 years, then yes, you have a big ego. Any conceptual self. So there is a type of meditation also in Tibetan Buddhism that, although I don't know very much about Tibetan Buddhism, but there is a type of meditation which is called, my Tibetan is not very good.

Dzogchen, or something like that, Dzogchen, which really is awareness. And it's not a technique, it's simple. And that is the deepest practice, I believe, I would say, that is the very heart of Tibetan Buddhism.

And the rest, of course, may be beautiful and so on, but it's a lot of elaboration, beautiful things, even philosophy is on top of all that. But if you go deep into the heart, you will find the pure awareness is the heart. If that ever is lost, then the whole thing would crumble.

So the heart is the... It's usually, I believe, considered a very advanced thing in Tibetan Buddhism. First, they give you things to play with, with your mind, can play for a few years, until gradually they take you deeper there, hopefully.

And then finally you touch the formless in yourself, which has always been there, of course. And that's the technique, no technique, just that. And that, of course, is the most pure form of meditation.

The others are there for those who are not quite ready for the technique-less form of meditation. And then, of course, you can also let go of the word meditation. That's good.

You're not doing a meditation anymore. That's a hindrance, that thought that I'm doing a meditation. And that very idea that you're doing a meditation comes in between you and who you are.

Because then you believe that you have something in between that needs to get you to where you want to get to, not realizing that you are already who you are. So this is this presence. When I had a talk, this panel conversation, with the Dalai Lama and a few other people, the moderator asked the Dalai Lama, he said, Eka teaches to be free of thinking, and the Dalai Lama seems to emphasize quite often to cultivate also your mind.

Perhaps this is something that in his culture is important because he might see that they neglected that aspect, cultivating your mind. So the moderator asked the Dalai Lama, what about that, letting go, becoming free of thinking and cultivating your mind, which you emphasize. And the Dalai Lama said, well, I would say that becoming free of thinking is for the few.

And I would like to add that he's probably right, and it was until recently that would have, not that long ago, that would have been entirely true. But my feeling is, I feel very strongly that there is a shift coming so that this state of presence is no longer just for the very few. Traditionally, it has been for the very few.

But now it is for not yet, of course, the majority of the population. But even if it were only for 3% of the population, it would be huge numbers. Even 1% would be huge numbers, and if 1% of the population entered presence and embraced the state of presence as their habitual state, then it would spread much more quickly from there.

So we are here to do that and allow it to happen. Again, we are not making it happen. It sometimes sounds, again, misinterpretations can happen easily, that when I say you can invite presence, sometimes one can feel, okay, I have to make it happen.

And then that moment you think, I have to make it happen, some kind of effort and tension comes back in. Okay, now you can see, I'll demonstrate now what that looks like when effort to be present, effort to hold presence, you become tense in the body and you're holding in. Now, with willpower, you can shut out thought.

You can practice that. It's not recommended. But with willpower, especially if it's associated with stopping breathing, you can hold thought at bay.

But just in the same way that after a while you need to breathe very deeply when you've been doing that, when you let go, an influx of thought comes that's even more powerful than before. So that won't help you really, those methods that involve willpower. But presence is gentle and powerful.

There's no willpower. It's not that I want it. You just, you're open to what wants to come through you.

So when I say practice, again, it's just open yourself to that, choose that. The ability to choose implies that there's already some presence there. It's only from there that you can say, yes, I want more, please, more of that.

I'm open to that. And then the art of living then becomes leading the rest of your life like that and not like that. Each finger representing a thought.

The lack of gap meaning complete identification with a stream of thinking. And this is just a little opening and if it becomes even more powerful then your life will look like that. There's actually more space than thought.

And that's wonderful when that happens. More space than thought, isn't that? And that's easy.

Don't believe your mind when it tells you you can't. You have to think. It's more important to think about this now than to not think.

Now your ability to, if you are interested in manifesting things in your life, which you may not be, that's fine. You may already have manifested the things that needed to be manifested in your life or you may be one of those sweet beings who are not drawn into creating anything out there. The frequency holders, hopefully they're frequency holders because otherwise they're just lazy.

And the frequency holders can of course easily drift into that when they forget that they are frequency holders. They forget that if you don't do very much externally then you need to embody presence. And the little that you still do, everybody does something, if only sweep up the leaves or whatever, the little that you do becomes imbued with presence and there's the quality in every doing and the peacefulness that flows into what you do.

And those, the danger of the frequency holders is that they fall from that beautiful state of presence into a state that is lethargic and is really below thinking. That can, so you need to be very alert when you're not, your life consists of very small little things to do. You've created just a little world around you and you're happy with that.

But you'd be too careful that you don't drift off into, frequency holders who don't know about presence can easily become, get drawn to drugs or become drifters or become very unhappy in this world, they don't fit in anywhere. But it can also happen that a frequency holder, this is one's natural tendency, somebody can be a frequency holder for a few years and then it can be a shift and you can suddenly become an active person. And vice versa also, you can be somebody whose mission it is to create new forms, hopefully consciously, and then after a while it may happen that suddenly you go within and you become a frequency holder.

You've created what you needed to create and you withdraw, maybe for a few years. And perhaps then you come out again, so that can happen too. You may not be one or the other for the whole length of your life or you may be like myself, a natural frequency holder who is responding to life that says, no, no, you come out, you have something to

do out here.

No. Can't I stay at home? And life says, no, sorry, can't.

Okay, I have to surrender to what life wants. And so you go out. It's not the natural thing for this form to be out in the world and doing things, but it's surrendered to it.

And occasionally still the pull comes to withdraw. And in the meantime, one is surrendered to what is beautiful too. So there's no resistance to doing it, but occasionally just a pull.

It's those who are into being active and then bring presence rather than creating through the unconsciousness of the ego that is the continuous wanting where you really are creating to make yourself feel bigger and to make yourself feel better in your own eyes or in the eyes of the world. That's the egoic creation. And when those people then become present, then they may still embody this need to create, but then they are no longer engaged in egoic creation.

They can cooperate with what wants to be created as part of the evolution here. And so they create. They become active but continuously connected with the alert stillness as they go out into this world and create.

The moment you lose touch with that, you lose yourself in the doing again. And that is the danger of those humans as opposed to the frequency holders whose danger is to go to sleep. The danger of those who are called upon to create in this world is that they, even as presence begins to flow into what they do, the doing can become so overpowering that they lose themselves again in the doing.

And so they become stressed. And they think that something that they are doing is more important than their state of consciousness now, which is peaceful and alert presence. So something is more important that they want to get to.

Stress arises. They lose themselves again. That's the danger of those.

And in between, there are many humans who embody, who are partly frequency holders and partly... And some don't know what you have to see within whether at this present time, this is a time for you to withdraw or it's a time to come out. It may be only you can know that, what it is that is required.

So if you are... Let's talk for a moment about those that create and manifest new structures, new forms. The foundation, of course, is the fullness of the present moment.

It's from there that you create. If you create from a sense of lack or neediness or wanting, it becomes egoic. And your power of creating is greatly diminished.

But if you come from a place of fullness already, then whatever you create is not... Its

purpose is not to enhance your sense of aliveness or well-being or happiness or to put it in simple words, you're not creating in order to feel more fulfilled or more happy than you are now or to become rid of your sense of insufficiency or unhappiness. And there are many books that are quite good these days about how to manifest.

Some books put too much emphasis on the manifesting, implying that if you only become a master at manifesting things, finally you will be okay. Of course, that's not the case. You could be the master of manifesting whatever you want, but if you have not found that which is timeless and formless within yourself, then nothing that you manifest will ultimately satisfy you.

So the foundation for any book or any teaching about manifesting needs always to be very clear that yes, there's nothing wrong with... It's part of what the universe does too. And then it does it through you consciously.

That's beautiful. But if it's only about that, it is one-sided and one-dimensional. The most vital dimension is the unmanifested, out of which all manifestation flows.

But if you're not aware of the unmanifested as the essence of who you are, the formless, timeless, stillness, consciousness itself, then whatever you create either will not satisfy you or it will even cause you anguish and problems. The very thing that you created, at first it looks great, and then suddenly it says, oh, it's bringing so many problems. So that's one way of speaking of the foundational aspect of creating is to speak of the, and some of these books do that, which is good, the gratitude for, the gratitude, they call it.

Gratitude. Now what does that imply? Gratitude is one of the most powerful factors in creating what's not there yet.

So the gratefulness for what is there is one of the most powerful tools for creating what is not yet there. Now what does that mean, gratefulness? It means that you appreciate what is.

You value, you give attention to, you honor whatever is here at this moment. So if you want abundance, there are still people, of course, who would like to have a little bit more abundance. There's nothing wrong with that in your external, but you need to find that sense of fullness first, which is inseparable from the present moment.

Instead of feeling a sense of lack and then try to create abundance, then your power is greatly diminished. You'd have to work very hard, and maybe then you'll make it, but then even that won't make you happy. Find first of all that sense of intense aliveness and fullness that is already here now.

You can start with external things to appreciate the aliveness and beauty of what is already in your life now. For example, how the light reflects off this table. You begin to see that there's usually...

